

TWENTY TWO
SERMONS

Preached upon

Several Occasions.

To which is added,

A Practical Discourse concerning SWEARING:
Especially in the two great Points, PERJURY,
and COMMON SWEARING. Being the Sub-
stance of some Sermons, preached upon those
Subjects.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By WILLIAM WAKE, D.D.
Late Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*.

VOL. II.

L O N D O N:

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TWENTY TWO

SERMONS

Several Occasions

A Printed Discourse copy of the same
Especially in the two great towns
and Common Schools of the same
France for the use of the
Schools



By William Warburton, D.D.
Late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury

LONDON

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*I wrote unto you in an Epistle, not to company
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Tet not altogether with the Fornicators of this World; or with the Covetous, or Extortioners, or with Idolaters, for then must ye needs go out of the World.

But now I have written unto you, not to keep Company, if any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such an one no not to eat. Page 367.

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Preach'd in the Parish Church of St. James, Westminster, March 18. 1704.

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I wrote unto you in an Epistle, not to company with Fornicators.

Tet not altogether with the Fornicators of this World; or with the Covetous, or Extortioners, or with Idolaters, for then must ye needs go out of the World.

But now I have written unto you, not to keep Company, if any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Coverous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. Page 385.

S E R M O N

S E R M O N I.

Preached at

St. James's Westminster,

April 5, 1699.

Being the Day of the Publick Fast:
Wherein the Case of the Exiled Van-
dois, and French Protestants, is stated;
And their Relief recommended to all
good Christians, especially to those of
the Reformed Religion.

MATT. X. 42.

*Whoſoever ſhall give to drink unto one of
theſe little Ones, a Cup of cold Water
only in the Name of a Diſciple; verily
I ſay unto you, he ſhall in no wiſe loſe
his Reward.*



OUR blessed Saviour having ſpent the
greateſt part of this Chapter in de-
claring to his Diſciples what Troubles
and Perſecutions, they ſhould undergo

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for

for his sake; takes occasion from thence, in the *Verses* before the *Text*, to shew, how we ought to behave our selves towards those who should fall into any *sufferings* upon such an Account; and how great the *Reward* of our so doing should be. *He that receiveth you, says he, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a Prophet, in the Name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophet's Reward. And he that receiveth a Righteous-man, in the Name of a Righteous-man, shall receive a Righteous-Man's Reward. And, whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little Ones, a Cup of cold Water only, in the Name of a Disciple; verily I say unto you he shall in no wise lose his Reward.*

I shall not trouble you with any nice enquiry into the *distinction* which our *Saviour*, in these Words, makes of those whom he therein recommends to our *Charity*, and *Entertainment*. Three sorts of *Christians* he manifestly refers to in them, and speaks of *those* in the *Text*, as the *least*, and *meanest*, of them all. And yet even of these he tells us, that *whosoever* should give but a *Cup of cold Water to drink*, to one such Christian, *in the Name of a Disciple*; that is, should shew the least regard to him upon this account that he *belong'd to Christ*; he *should in no wise lose his Reward*; i. e. he should be *very highly rewarded by God* for it.

Now this being the *Occasion*, and *Import*, of these Words, I shall with relation to both, proceed

ceed to discourse upon them, in this following Method;

I. I will shew you, that those who *profess* the Gospel of Christ, must expect oftentimes to meet with *Tryals*, and *Persecutions*, from *wicked Men*, upon the account of it.

II. That it is the *Duty* of every good Christian, according to his Ability, to *assist* and *support* those who *suffer* upon such an Account. And,

III. That whatsoever *Charity* we shall exercise towards such *Persons*, upon the account of their *Sufferings*, it shall turn to our great advantage in the *other World*; where we shall be, in a singular manner, rewarded by God for it.

I shall speak, but very briefly, to each of these Points; and so proceed to that *Application* of them, which the present occasion requires of Me. And,

I. That those who *profess* the Gospel of Christ, must expect oftentimes to meet with *Tryals*, and *Persecutions*, from *wicked Men*, upon the account of it.

This was what our *Saviour* expressly declared to his *Disciples* in this Chapter; and their own *Experience* sufficiently convinced them of the *Truth* of his *Prediction*.

If we look back to the *first State* of the Church, before the conversion of the *Empire* to Christ.

Christianity; what are all its *Histories* but the *Records* of those *Tryals* which its most eminent Professors underwent for the sake of it? What *Torments* they endured; what *Oppositions* they met with; and by what *Deaths* they *perfected* all their other Sufferings? When, in the Language of our *Apostle*, every one who would live *Godly in Christ Jesus*, was sure to suffer *Persecution*. Their *Religion* was their *Crime*: And there was no choice left them but to *renounce* it; or to resolve to *suffer*, it may be to *die*, for it.

Nor did the *Case* become much better afterwards. 'Tis true, the *pretence* of the *Persecution* was alter'd: Men did not any longer suffer for the *Name* of *Christ*, as they had done before. But the *truth* of the *Gospel* was still *persecuted*, tho' under another *Character*: Whilst the *Sufferings* which *Christians* have brought on their fellow *Christians* have not been at all *less*, than what had been inflicted upon them by their *common Enemies* heretofore.

It is indeed a most astonishing thing to consider to what a strange *degeneracy* the *Spirit* of *Christianity* has fallen in this particular. That a *Religion* founded upon *Love* and *Charity*, and which breaths out nothing more than *kindness*, and *gentleness*, in all its Precepts; should yet have become the occasion of more *cruelty*, and *barbarity*, than ever any *Religion* in the World besides has been. But that which is yet more *amazing*, as well as more *deplorable*, is; that Men should make it a matter of *Conscience*

to the *Principles* of such a *Religion* to *persecute* one another: And think that they *do God Service*, when they *Dye* their *Hands* with the *blood* of his *Servants*. Yet to this degree of *fury* have some *Christians*, in these later *Ages*, arrived: And have thereby given us but too just a ground, still to continue the Assertion I have laid down; that those who will *profess* the *Gospel* of *Christ*, in the *Truth*, and *Purity* of it, must expect, even in *Christian Countries*, to fall oftentimes under the *severest Tryals* for the sake of it.

How this *barbarous*, and *bloody Spirit*, first got admission into the *Church of Christ*, I shall not now enquire. Certain it is, that as there is nothing more *unreasonable*, in the nature of the thing its self, than to *force Conscience*, and to *persecute* Men into a *right faith*; so is there nothing more contrary to all the *Rules* of the *Gospel*, than to propagate its interests by *violence*, and *oppression*. This the *Primitive Christians* constantly objected to their *Heathen Enemies*. This all the *best*, and *wisest Men*, have generally asserted ever since: And even the most *perverse*, see the *reasonableness* of it, when it comes to be their *own Case*; and they are themselves in danger of *suffering* upon *this Account*. And yet such is the strange partiality of *Mankind*, that we hardly any of us know how to set bounds to this *Temper*, when we have the *Power* in our *Hands*. We think we have *all a Right* to *persecute* others, tho' none have any to return it
B 3 upon

upon *our selves*. And accordingly, we do all, in our several turns, both *rail* at *Persecution* in *Matters of Religion*, and yet continue to *set up* for it.

But as this Temper has always been observed to prevail most on the *worst Side*; (which is generally found to make up with *violence*, what it wants in *Argument*;) So of all kinds of *Christians* never have any been more scandalously guilty of this *Barbarity* than those of the *Church of Rome*; that *dishonour* to the *Name*, and *Scourge* to the *Disciples*, of *Christ*. Whose *Religion* as it has a great *Allay of Paganism*, in it; so we ought the less to wonder if we see it wholly acted by a *Pagan Spirit*. And of the *Corruptions* whereof I shall, at present, say no more than this; that had we no other Ground than this to *reject* it, even this alone would be enough to warrant us in our disowning of it; that she has *glutted* her self with the *Blood* of the *best Christians*, and still continues to *thirst* for *more*: And openly avows that Principle, which I am now speaking against as *Cruel* and *Anti-Christian*; that *Religion is to be propagated, and maintain'd, by the Sword*.

I shall not here enter on any particular relation of those *Persecutions*, with which that *Church* has filled the *Histories* of the whole World, for some *Ages* past: And of which not only *Europe*, but *Asia*, and *America*; *Infidels*, as well as *Christians*, have been the *Speetators*. Blessed be God! neither her *Cruelties*, nor her *Corruptions*, are unknown to any of us. It shall suffice

suffice to say, that as our *Saviour Christ* from the beginning knew what would happen to his *Church* to the very end of the World; and fore-saw as well, what the *Church* of Rome in these latter *Ages* should do to it, as what the *Jews* and *Heathens*, were at the beginning to bring upon it; so we must conclude that, in this *Chapter*, he referred indifferently to both: And designed no less to *fortify*, and *instruct*, us of these *Times*, how to behave our selves under the *Persecutions* of *Popery*; than to direct his *Apostles*, and *Primitive Disciples*, how it would behove them to manage themselves, with relation to the *Heathen*, and *Jewish*, *Cruelty*.

Let this then be our first Conclusion, founded on the *foreknowledge* of *Christ*, and the *Corruption* of *Humane Nature*; which hitherto we are sure has been, and we have Reason to fear, will always continue to be but too true; viz. That those who profess the *Truth* of *Christianity*, and will hold fast to the *purity* of it; must expect to meet with many *Tryals*, and *Persecutions*, from wicked Men upon the account of it. I proceed,

II. To shew; That it is the duty of every good *Christian*, according to his Ability, to *assist* and *support* those, who suffer on such an Account.

And that whether we consider them (1st.) under the *common Character* of *Christians*. Or

(2^{dly.}) under the more *particular Circumstance*, of *suffering for Righteousness sake*.

(1^{st.}) If we consider them under the *common Character of Christians*; even this alone will oblige us not only to *minister to their Wants*, but to do it with a *singular love*, and *affection of Mind* towards them. God who has commanded us to *do good unto all Men*^a; has also commanded us to *do it*, in a more especial manner, to *those who are of the Household of Faith*. There is a *Brotherly*^b *Love* required of us by *Christ*, towards *one another*, beyond what we are obliged to have for the *rest of Mankind*: And which ought to dispose us to a more tender *sense* of, and *compassion* for their *Needs*; and with that, to a more *bountiful supply* of them. So that tho' a *Christian* must *love his very Enemy*; and *do good to those who despitefully use him, and persecute him*^c; yet he must remember, that there is a difference to be made by him between a *Brother*, and an *Enemy*; and he must as much *love*, and *do good to the one*, beyond the *other*, as he is more *nearly related* to the *one*, than to the *other*.

But this is the least part of our *Obligation* in the *Case* before us: Which as it supposes the *suffering* to be for the sake of *Christ's Religion*, so will it,

^a Gal. vi. 10.
^c Mat. v. 44.

^b Heb. xiii. 1. 1 Pet. i. 22. 1 Jo. iii. 16.

(2^{dly}.) Oblige us, in a more particular manner, to *relieve* those, who fall into their *Distresses* upon such an account.

In such Circumstances as these, not to *assist* our *Brethren*, is to *deny* our *Faith*: And the *neglect* we put upon them, will fall not so much upon *them*, as upon *him* whose *Disciples* they are, and for whose sake they suffer.

Hence we may observe, in all the ancient *Persecutions* of the *Church*, with what an officious diligence the other Christians still attended upon their *Martyrs*, and *Confessors*. How they ministered to them in their *Prisons*, and *Bonds*: Went with them to their *Judgments*; and would not leave them at their *Executions*. With what *zeal*, and *readiness*, they furnish'd them with such things as they stood in need of: How they *encouraged* them in their *Conflicts*; and shewed their earnest desire to *partake* with them in their *Sufferings*, as they did in the *Cause* for which they suffered.

Thus they *confess'd* *Christ*, by owning of those who were *persecuted* for their *Confession* of him: And thus ought every good Christian to confess him still. In a *publick War*, if any one part of a *Country* be destroy'd, it is but an act of *Justice* for the rest to bear their Share in the *Loss*; and, to contribute towards the repair of the *Damage* that was sustain'd by it. The *Case* is, in reality, the same here. We are all *Members* of the same *Common, Catholick, Church* of *Christ*. If *Persecution* for the *Faith* arises, which

which part soever *suffers*, 'tis the *Church* that is *persecuted*. And we ought to account our selves concern'd to bear our share in the *Evils* which our Fellow-Christians undergo, for the *Common Cause* of the *Gospel*; as we hope to be one day made partakers with them, in the *Promises* of it.

Here therefore is a duty, which not *Christian Charity* alone, but even *Common Justice*, and *Equity*, oblige us unto. In this Case, to *desert* our *Brethren*, is to *betray* our *Faith*; and we shall, in effect, *renounce* the *Cause* for which they *suffer*, if we refuse to *partake* with them in their *Sufferings*. But to *own*, and to *receive* them; to *cherish*, and *relieve* them; and that as *suffering* for the *Cause* of *Christ*; this is openly to join with them in their *Confession*: And, as our *Saviour* here assures us, if we do *communicate* with them in their *Afflictions*, we shall also be made partakers with them of their *Reward*.

Which brings me to the last *Point* I proposed to speak to;

III. That whatsoever *Charity* we shall exercise towards such *Persons*, upon the account of their *Sufferings*; it shall turn to our *great advantage* in the other World; where we shall be, in a *singular Manner*, rewarded by God for it.

There is hardly any *Virtue* prescribed to us in the *Gospel*, to the *Practice* whereof so many *Promises* have been made by God, as to this of *Charity*. In the *Old Testament*, it pleased God to encourage the *Jews* to a liberal Exercise of it,
by

by the hope of a *present Retribution* that should be made to them for it. And tho' under the *Gospel*, such *Promises* as these are not to be expected; yet has our *Saviour Christ* assured us, that a *plentiful Reversion* shall be laid up for us in *Heaven*, to reward every act of *Charity* that we perform here upon *Earth*.

An eminent Argument whereof we meet with in the account which he has given us of the *last Judgment*; where he seems to make the whole Issue of our *Acquittal*, or *Condemnation*, in a manner to depend upon it. For having told us how he will then divide the *d Sheep from the Goats*; and set the one on his *Right Hand*, and the other on his *Left*; he thus delivers the *Sentence* which he will pass on both. He will say to those on his *Right Hand*; come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World. For I was an Hungry and ye gave me Meat; I was Thirsty and ye gave me Drink; Naked and ye cloathed me; Sick and in Prison, and ye Ministered unto me. But he will say to those on his Left Hand; Depart ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil, and his Angels. For I was an Hungry, and ye gave me no Meat; I was Thirsty and ye gave me no Drink; Naked and ye Cloathed me not; Sick and in Prison, and ye visited me not. These are the Sentences, which our *Saviour Christ*

^d Matt. xxv. 32, 33, 34, 35, 41, 42.

will pronounce upon the *Good* and *Bad* at the *last Day*. From which if we may not generally conclude, that our *Charity* is the *only* thing that shall hereafter be enquired into, and be either *rewarded*, or *punished*, for ever; yet thus much we may certainly infer, that it is one of the main Things by which our *Piety* shall be judged of: And that he who has a true *love* for his *Neighbour*, and is upon all Occasions ready to do all the *good* he can for him, shall hardly fail of being *accepted* by *God*, as he will be sure to be generally *belov'd* of *Men*, for his *Beneficence*.

But it is not only our *Charity* that shall entitle us to a *Reward*, in the present Case; tho' even that alone would be sufficient, to make good the *Promise* of the *Text* to us. He who relieves a *persecuted Christian*, in the *Name* of a *Disciple*; because he belongs to *Christ*, and suffers for *his Sake*; shall be considered by *God*, not barely for his *Charity* towards his *Neighbour*, but for his *confession* of *Christ* too: And have a part in the *Reward*, which the other is to receive upon the account of his *Persecution*.

And this at once both *ascertains*, and *increases*, the Retribution of such a *Charity*. It renders it both more *excellent* in its self, and more *acceptable* unto *God*: Who as he will, in the first place, *reward* those who *suffer* for his sake; so will he in the next, consider *those* who *own* them in their *Sufferings*; and extend their *pious Beneficence* to them upon the account of them.

Hence we may observe, with what extraordinary

nary *Circumstances*, our *Saviour Christ* delivers the *Promise* of the *Text* to this purpose. The *Person* of whom he speaks, is one of the *least* of his *Disciples*; the meanest of any that should be called to *suffer* for his sake. The *Charity*, in which he instances, is the poorest of all *Charities*: A *Cup of cold Water*; such as the most indigent *Person* is able to give, and hardly any can be so far reduced as to stand in need of it. And yet even this *little, contemptible act* of *Charity*, if done to one of the *meanest* of *Christ's Disciples* in the *Name* of a *Disciple*, shall not lose its *Reward*. So acceptable a thing is it to God for us to *confess* him, in any way, *before Men*! And so certainly shall he who does it, be *gloriously rewarded* by him to all *Eternity*!

And here then let us stop; and from the general consideration of the *Duty proposed*, and of the great *Reward* which it has pleased God to *promise* to the faithful discharge of it; proceed to that *Application* which his *Providence* has called us, at this time, to make of it. In pursuance whereof, if the *Principles* already laid down be admitted, as the true measure both of our *Duty*, and *Interest*, in this particular; then I shall need only to shew, that you have here a proper *Occasion* presented to you, to *practise* the *one*, and to *advance* the *other*. And that I shall do in this following method.

1st. I will shew, That the *Persons* here recommended to your *Charity*, are indeed the *Disciples* of *Christ*.

2^{dly}. That they *do suffer* for Righteousness sake. And therefore,

3^{dly}. Ought to be *considered*, and *relieved* by us, upon the account of such their *Sufferings*.

And 1st. That the *Persons* here recommended to your *Charity*, are indeed the *Disciples of Christ*.

This is a Point that I should not have thought it needful to insist upon, had not the *Calumnies* of our common *Enemies* obliged me to it. But since they have thought fit again to revive the *malicious*^c *Slanders* of their *ignorant*, and *prejudiced Revilers*; and to set them off to the World with all the advantage that their *Wit*, and *Language*, enabled them to do; it is necessary in justice to these *poor persecuted Christians*, to place their *History* in its true light; and to express our *Charity* towards them, as well by *vindicating* their *Reputation*, as by *ministring* to their *Needs*.

To take then this Matter from the beginning: The *Persons* of whom we are now speaking, are a Portion of the *Christians* of the *Evangelical Churches* of *Piemont*. The *common Name* by which they are most known, is that of *Vaudois*, or *Waldenses*. So called, not from *Peter*^f *Waldo*, as has commonly been supposed; but from the place of their *Habitation*, the *Valleys* under

^c Monsieur de Meaux's *Variations des Eglises Protestan.* liv. xi.

^f Leger. *Hist. des Eglises Evangel. des Vallees de Piemont.* liv. i. c. 2. Allix. *Remarks*, chap. xix.

the *Alpes*; within three of which the *Churches* we are now speaking of were comprehended.

Who it was that first planted the *Gospel* in these Parts; or about what *time* it was done, we cannot certainly tell. But as our *Religion* was propagated in the very times of the *Apostles*, into the other Parts of *Italy*; so is it most probable that it was, not long after, *settled* here too; tho' by what *Evangelist* we are not able to determine.

Christianity being thus brought into these Parts, and that, no doubt, in the same Purity in which it was generally taught in those *first Ages*; continued in this *Country*, as it did in *others*, for some considerable time, if not free from *all Corruption*; yet, at least, free from those *dangerous Errors* which afterwards crept into the Church. But about the *eighth Century*, the business of *Image Worship*, added to some other more *early Superstitions*; began to disturb the *Churches Peace*, and to *enflame* the *Zeal* of the *best Christians* to the opposing of it.

Great was the contention between the *Eastern*, and *Western Churches*, upon this Occasion: The one, with the second *Synod* of *Nice*, (by them accounted a *general Council*) standing up in the *defence* of *Images*: The other, with that of *Frankford*, as stiffly declaring against the *Worship* of them.

Among those who, in these *Western Parts*,

§ Vid. Car. M. & Synod. Paris. Script. de Imagin.

appeared in the defence of the *Christian Truths*, none was more eminent than ^b *Claudius*, the learned, and zealous Bishop of *Turin*; in whose *Diocess* these *Churches* of the *Valleys* lay. The Point he began with, was this of *Images*: But his *Piety*, and *Learning*, soon carried him farther; and led him on both to the *discovery*, and the *reformation*, of several other *Abuses*, that had privily crept into those Parts. The *Invocation of Saints*; the *superstitious Use*, and *Honour*, of *Relics*; but, above all, the groundless Pretence of the *Pope's Authority*; were the chief Points against which he declared his Resentments: And the Issue of his Endeavours was, that tho' he met with much *Opposition*, and raised to himself many *Enemies*, yet he went on prosperously with his Underraking; and laid the Foundation of that *Purity of Christianity* in his *Diocess*, which has ever since been preserved by these *Churches* of the *Valleys* to this very Day.

Thus early began the *Reformation of Religion* in those Parts: But that which most contributed to the future Security of it, was another Accident which fell out not long after; and of which it will therefore be necessary for me to give you a particular Account.

In the *first Times* of ⁱ *Christianity*, so far was the *Bishop of Rome* from being thought to have

^b Catal. Test. verit. lib. ix. in Claudio. Ion. Aurel. de Cult. Imag. contr. Claud. Taurin. Bibl. PP. Tom. xiv.

ⁱ Car. à S. Paul Geogr. S. lib. ii. Ital. n. iv. vii. x. Allix. Remarks chap. xiii.

a general Authority over the whole Church of Christ, that his Jurisdiction did not extend to the neighbouring Diocess of Italy its self. His Authority was limited to a certain Tract of Land about the City, called the Sub urbicary Region; Whilst the Churches of Italy were under another Government, and acknowledged the Bishop of Milan for their Head.

It cannot be doubted but that this must have been no small grievance to the ambitious tempers, and designs, of the Bishops of Rome: Who therefore omitted no endeavours to gain the Bishop of Milan to their side; and to persuade him to yield to their Authority. Yet still that Church preserved its Liberty for near 1100 years after Christ^k; and then by Artifice, and Faction, was either forced, or persuaded, to part with it.

It happen'd about that time, that among other things a Controversy was raised between the Clergy, and People, of that Diocess, concerning the Marriage of their Priests. To compose this, Pope Nicholas II. became a Mediator between them; and sent Peter Damian, as his Legate, to manage the matter for him. And the Conclusion was, that tho' with much difficulty, and at the hazard of his Life; the cunning Legate, carried his Point, and persuaded the Bishop to submit to him.

Scarce was this Affair well ended, and the Legate gone, before the Bishop began to perceive

^k Allix. Remarks Ch. xiv. Baron. Annal. An. 1059.

the false *Step* he had made; and resolved, in the best manner he could, to recover himself out the Snare into which he had fallen. In order whereunto, he called a *Synod* of his own *Province*; disannull'd all that the *Legate* had done; and asserted the *Rights* of the *married Clergy*.

From hence began an *open Schism* in the *Church of Milan*. The one part adhered to the *Interests of Rome*: The other, with their *Archbishop*, stood up for their own *Liberties*; and the *Rights of the Clergy*. And being for this deserted by the rest, they communicated by themselves in a place called *Pataria*; and from thence were afterwards known by the Name of *Patarines*.

To this Party, as that which had the greatest Right on its side, the *Churches of the Valleys* joyn'd themselves. And being thus broke off from the *Communion of the Roman Church*, they kept themselves free from the *Corruptions* of it; and maintained themselves in so much the greater Purity, by their *constant, and earnest, Oppositions* to it.

It was not long after this, that *Peter¹ Waldo*, of whom I before spake, began a *Reformation of Religion at Lyons*: Whose Party being dispersed, many of them chose to retire for safety into the *Valleys*; and thereby gave occasion to the vulgar Error of his being the first Founder of the *Evangelical Churches* there.

¹ Leger Hist. des Vaudoises, l. i. c. 25.

Thus were these *Churches* both betimes re-form'd; and settled, and secured, in their pure *Profession* of the *Gospel*. It would be too long to relate, what great good was done, by their means, to all the other *Churches* of *Europe*. What *Colonies* they sent out into *France*, *Germany*, *England*, and even into *Italy* its self; to propagate the *Truth* of the *Gospel*. From these *Churches* it was that our *Wicleff* derived his *Faith*, and *Knowledge*. From these, the *Churches* of *Bohemia* were establish'd. Here, in short, was the *Truth* of *Religion* both taught, and maintain'd; till at last it pleased God to give it a free *Passage*, and a larger *Dominion*, by the great *Reformation* which was generally made in *Europe* about the beginning of the last *Century*^m.

These then are the *Persons* whom we now recommend to your *Charity*. They are a part of the most antient of all the reformed *Churches* of *Europe*. Who by breaking off betimes from the *Tyranny*, and *Communion*, of the *Bishop* of *Rome*, were never at all involved in the most part of those *Errors* which that *Church* abounds with; and from the ninth *Century* downwards, have stood clear of those into which they were before fallen.

I go on, 2^{dly}, To shew, That what they now suffer, is for the sake of the *Gospel* of *Christ*.

I have before observed, that it was about the middle of the xith *Century*, that the *Church* of

^m About the Year 1517.

Rome usurping upon the *Authority* of that of *Milan*, occasion'd a *Separation* of many of the *Italic Churches* from its *Communion*; and of these of the *Valleys* among the rest. And if we look back into the *Ecclesiastical History* of that *Province*, we shall find that from thenceforth they never enjoy'd any rest from those *Violences*, and *Oppressions*, which the *Malice* and *Interest* of that *proud, ambitious See*, found means to raise against them.

To pass by the *Bulls*, the *Sentences*, and *Ex-communications*, which were continually thunder'd from the *Vatican* against them; and the effect of which many of these poor Men sufficiently felt, in the time of *Pope Alexander III. Anno. 1180.* ° How terrible was the *Decree* of *Pope Lucius III.* against them? Who not content to *ex-communicate* them for their *Heresy*, and to invite the *Civil Government* to engage on his side against them; obliged all Princes to take a *Corporal Oath* to make search after them, and to use their utmost endeavours utterly to extirpate them out of their *Dominions*.

Thus their *Tryals*, and *Persecutions* began; but they did not stop here. ° For what *Lucius* decreed, *Pope Innocent III.* took care to put in vigorous Execution. He renew'd this *Order* against them; and caus'd diligent search to be

° Vid. Concil. Lateran. iii. apud Labb. Tom. x. p. 1504. & cap. xxvii. de Hæreticis.

° Ibid. Col. 1737.

p Concil. iv. Lateran. cap. 3. de Hæret. Add. Labb. Tom. x. pag. 234.

every where made after them. And to strengthen the *Churches Authority*, Pope *Honorius III*, not only continued the same *Method*, but obtain'd of the Emperor ^a *Frederic II*, that memorable *Edict*, which is still preserved in the *Feudal Law*, against them.

But above all the rest, most effectual was the *Course* which *Gregory IX*, pitch'd upon to destroy them. He settled the *Inquisition* into an establish'd *Office* for that Purpose; and so perfected the Design which his Predecessor *Innocent III*, had set on foot, for their Ruin.

How those *barbarous Executioners* of the *Iniquity* of the *Romish See*, proceeded against them, it were too long to recount. Much they suffer'd, both by their *secret Proceedings*, and by their *open Violences*. I shall rather observe, that when this *Method* also proved too slow to answer the *eager Desires*, and *Expectations*, of their *Enemies*; at length Pope ^r *Innocent VIII*, bethought himself of a more compendious way of doing their Business. He raised a *Holy War* against them: And sent *Albert* his *Legate* into the *Valleys*, at the Head of 18000 Men, all bent with Zeal, and Armes, to their Destruction.

But from this *bloody Attempt* also, it pleased God to deliver them: Who in despite of all their Endeavours, has continued them still *Monuments*

^a Frederic. ii. Constit. §. 5, 6, 7, 8. Constit. Feud. pag. 27. Labb. Tom. xi. col. 334.

^r Leger. Hist. l. ii. c. 2. Morland. l. ii. c. 1.

of his *own Mercy*; and for a reproach of the *Cruelty*, as well as *Corruptions*, of their *Roman Persecutors*.

At last, another *Method* was resolved upon; and that such a one, as nothing but the miraculous Hand of God could have deliver'd them from it. A *Congregation* was erected, and fix'd at *Turin* (the *Capital City* of the *Dukes of Savoy*, in whose Territories the most considerable part of these *Churches* were seated) for the *Propagation of the Faith*, and the *destruction of Hereticks*; so its *Stile* ran; but which in truth was intended for the particular design of ruining the *Churches* of the *Valleys*; as the Event has too plainly shewn.

It was about the time of the last *Jubilee*, that this Design was unhappily formed against them; and it was but a very little while before they felt the deplorable Effects of it: Their whole *Country* being so utterly *ruined* in 1655, and their Numbers so weaken'd; that but for the present *Interposition* of almost all the *Protestant Princes*, and *States*, of *Europe* on their behalf, they must have fallen under a *final desolation*. But from this *last disaster*, that Part of these *Churches* which is now recommended to your Charity, had the good Fortune to be preserved: Who having, some *v* years before, been united to the *French*

* Leger. Hist. l. ii. chap. 6.

† Leger. l. ii. c. 9, &c. Sir Sam. Morland Hist. of Piem. l. ii.

‡ Anno. 1633. Memor. Recond. di. Vittorio Siri. Vol. vii. p. 500, &c.

Crown, as Dependents on the *Garrison* of *Pignerol*, enjoyed thereby the Protection of that *State*.

What their Condition since that time has been, the severe Proceedings of that Court against all the *Reformed Churches* of its Dominions, may suffice to tell us. I shall only observe, that being forced by the *Persecutions* they suffer'd from their *new Masters*, to retire to their Brethren under the *Duke of Savoy's* Government; they accordingly bare their share in the great *Calamities* which that *Prince* brought upon the *Valleys* * in the year 1686.

How their *present Circumstances* stand his *Majesty's Letters* set out to you. They are *banish'd* from their *Country*; forced to abandon their *Houses*, and *Lands*, their *Friends*, and *Relations*; and to seek for refuge in such other *Places*, as the *Providence* of *God*, and the *Charity* of *Protestant States*, and *Princes*, should provide for them.

And here then let us stop, and take a short view of the miserable Condition of these poor, *persecuted Christians*; and consider what they have *suffer'd*, during these last 600 years, upon the account of their *Religion*.

If 1st, we regard the *Cruelty* of their *Persecutors*, what barbarous Slaughters have they committed upon them? The * *Histories* are still

* See the Account of that Persecution published at Oxford, 4^o. 1689.

* Leger. Hist. des Vaudois, Morland. History of the Evangel. Churches of Piem. Book ii. c. 6, &c.

extant, and some of them in our own Language, that convey the Particulars to us: And they give us so lively an *Image* of the true *Spirit* of *Popery*, that I cannot but wish they were in the hands of every *sober*, and *charitable*, *Christian* among us.

Thus much in general, I may venture to say; that whether we consider the *number* of those who have *suffer'd* by their *Hands*, or the *nature*, and *quality*, of their *Sufferings*; scarce did the whole *Church* of *Christ* undergo more in the *ten Heathen Persecutions*, than these poor *Churches* alone have undergone, from the more than *Heathen Cruelty*, and *Inhumanity* of their *Romish Enemies*.

Nor has 2^{dly}. The *Injustice* of their *Sufferings* been less evident, than their *Sufferings* themselves have been *notorious*. To say nothing of the strange *Paradox*, of *Christians* persecuting of *Christians*, for the Profession of the *Gospel* of *Christ*: To omit the *inoffensiveness* of their *Lives*, and *Manners*; and in which their very *Enemies* themselves, after all the false pretences of some others of their *Party*, have gloriously justified them: What can be more unjust; than for a People dwelling as it were alone; *separated* by *vast Mountains* from all their Neighbours round about them; content with what *Nature* furnishes them withal; and desiring only to live in Peace with their *Neighbours*, and in the *quiet Enjoyment* of a good *Conscience* to-

wards God; should, for nothing but their Religious Opinions, be harass'd, and oppress'd: *Hunted* like *wild Beasts*; *persecuted* with *Fire*, and *Sword*; and treated as if they were not worthy to live upon the Earth?

Nay but this is not all: Their *Enemies* have not only thus persecuted them *without a Cause*; but against their own most *solemn*, and *sacred*, *Engagements* to the contrary. They have broken the *Publick Faith*; *violated* their own *Treaties*, and *Promises*; and effectually shewn how little *Truth* they think themselves *obliged* to keep with those whom they call *Heretics*: whenever they can get a fair opportunity to destroy them.

And had their *Fury*, and their *Malice*, been content to stop at their *Lives*, and *Goods*, it might the more easily have been excused. But their *Cruelty*, and their *Falseness* have carried them beyond these; whilst to *excuse* their own *Proceedings*, and *bespatter* their *Adversaries*; they have,

3^{dly}; Done, what in them lies, to murder the *Reputation* of those whom they have *persecuted*: And to render them *odious* to the *present Age*; and *infamous*, and *detestable*, to all *succeeding Generations*.

Witness those false^z Accounts which they have industriously spread abroad in the World of these poor Men. If we enquire into their *Faith*;

^z Leger. Hist. l. i. c. 19, 30. Allix. Remarks c. 26.

they are *Arians*, and *Manichees*; that is to say, Monsters of Men; and not worthy of the *Name*, or *Character* of *Christians*. If we consider their *Manners*; their very *publick Meetings* are full of *Lust*, and *Debauchery*: And they commit in them such *Sins*, as ought not to be once named among the *Saints*. And as for the *Proceedings* that have been made against them; they have been for their *Sedition* and *Rebellion*. They have drawn the *fury* of *War* upon themselves, by their own unquiet Behaviour; and may thank their own undutiful demeanor to their Princes, for whatsoever *Calamities* they have *suffer'd* from them.

These are the Accounts which those of the *Roman Communion* have delivered to the World of these *poor Christians*. I shall not need to say that in all this they only set forth their *own* Falseness, and Malice; and publish to the World not what these *Christians are*, but what they would have Men *think them* to be^b. This their *own Authors*, have sufficiently already done. It is enough that we know who they are that give us these *Characters*, to enable us to judge what credit is to be given to them: And that beyond the *Alps*, among those of the *Roman Communion*, we our selves are set forth in as *black Characters*, both with respect to our *Faith*, and *Manners*; as ever these distressed Persons have been represented to us, on this side the Mountains. The short of the Matter is, that both

^a Leger. lib. 11. c. 10, &c.

^b See Leger. before.

They, and *We*, freely declare against the *Tyranny*, and *Corruptions* of the *Church of Rome*; and that is enough to warrant the worst that can be said, to *blacken*, and *bespatter*, both *Them*, and *Us*.

But I must not insist upon these Matters; but having now, more fully than I design'd, shewn, both *who* the *Persons* are who ask your *Charity*; and *how* they come to *stand* in *need* of it; shall proceed,

3^{dly}: And very briefly to represent to you, what just Reason we have to *succour*, and *assist* them, upon the account of these their *Sufferings*.

If (1st,) we consider either the *Cause*, or *Authors*, of their *Persecution*; it will from both appear that we of the *Reform'd Religion* must *support* them; or they must be left to sink under their *Afflictions*: For we may be confident, if we do not *help* them, no body else will.

Were the Case here that of *Christianity* in *general*; did these poor Men suffer by the Hands of *Turks*, and *Infidels*; one might then hope that the *comon Love*, and *Duty*, we all profess to our *blessed Saviour*, and his *Gospel*, might move every *Church*, however differing in other Matters, yet to join together for their *Relief*. But it is the misfortune of those for whom we are now concern'd, that they are persecuted not by the *common Enemy*, but by those who are called by the *same Name* of *Christians*. They suffer, not for the *defence* of the *Gospel*, but for the *maintenance* of the *Truth*, and *Purity*, of it; against those

those who have either *mistaken*, or *perverted*, the right *Faith* of it. And if we, who in this are *agreed* with *them*, do not *relieve* them; with what Reason can we expect, that those whom they *oppose*, and by whom they are *persecuted*, should help them?

Here therefore is a Case, in which the *Argument* of the *Text* returns with a *double force* upon us. These *Persons* are not only the *Disciples* of *Christ*; but of the same *particular Faith*, and *Communion*, with our selves. They are our *Brethren* both as they are *Christians*, and as they are *Reform'd too*; and which is yet more, they *suffer* for being so. They might have *believed* in *Christ*, and yet have continued in the peaceable Enjoyment of their *Country*, and *Possessions*. But they could not have continued *reform'd* without *quitting* them; and therefore they readily forsook both. And surely the least we can do to testify our concurrence with them in this *Profession*, will be to extend our *Charity* towards them: And thereby to shew that we do own their *Cause*; and account it such as deserves to be *suffer'd* for.

But (2^{dly}.) it is not barely a *Matter* of *Charity*, but of *Interest* also to us, to *help*, and *relieve* them: And that is an *Argument*, which where it is once *received*, seldom fails of *prevailing* with most Men.

It cannot be unknown to any among us what *Endeavours* have been *used*, and what *Projects* have been *laid*, for these last *forty*, or *fifty* Years,

Years, utterly to root the *Protestant Interest* out of *Europe*. What progress has been made by our Enemies to this purpose in *Piemont, Hungary, Bohemia, France*; shall I add, and here at Home too, both in *England, and Ireland*, is evident to all of us. And had the design succeeded, as it was verily *believed, and hoped*, it would have done; I do not see what could have preserved the *Reform'd Religion* from a *general destruction*.

But blessed be God! Who in most of these places has disappointed their *Designs*; and we hope will, in the end, turn them, (as he has already in part done) to their own *shame, and confusion*. And has effectually convinced us, how necessary it is for us to *unite* together in *Interest, and Affection* against our *common Enemies*; if ever we mean to *support* our *Selves*, and our *Cause*, from *ruin*; by their *unwearied Malice*, and indefatigable Endeavours against us.

It is but a little time since we were called upon to receive those of the *reform'd Church* of *France* into our Bosoms. By doing of this we have preserved so much of the *Protestant Interest* from sinking. And all that their *Persecutors* have gained by their Cruelties against them, is but this, that they have forced them to *change* their *Country*; but have not at all lessened either their *Zeal* for their *Religion*, or their *Ability* to *defend* it.

We are now invited to preserve the *Remains* of the same *Church*, and of some of those of the
Valleys

Valleys of Piemont with them. A ^c *Flock* little in *Number*, but of *great Worth*: And such as we cannot *suffer* to perish, without fixing an *eternal Infamy* upon our *Names* for our *Uncharitableness*.

Whose turn it may next be to suffer in this *Cause*, we cannot tell. This we know, that be it whose it will, our *Charity* will have its *reward* with *God*; and give a good *Example*, and *Encouragement*, to the *Church of Christ*. We may, by what we do for these poor, persecuted Men, *prolong* our own *Tranquillity*; and so meet with a *reward* on *Earth*: But though we should not; yet this we are sure, that we shall hereby purchase to our selves an *Inheritance* in *Heaven*. Our *unrighteous Mammon*, shall prepare for us an *eternal Habitation*. What we now give for the sake of *Christ*, and to his *Disciples* in his *Name*; he will one Day return, as if we had done it unto *himself*: And *verily I say unto you*, *ye shall, in no wise lose the Reward of it*.

^c About 11500 Persons.



S E R M O N II.

Preached at

*St. James's Westminster,**November 5, 1699.*

In which it is shewn,

That the *Principles*, and *Practices*, of
the CHURCH of ROME, with re-
lation to those whom they call HE-
RETICKS; are not only destructive of
Civil Society, but are utterly irrecon-
cileable with the *Gospel of Christ*.



MATT. vii. 15, 16.

*Beware of False Prophets, which come to
you in Sheeps-Cloathing, but inwardly
they are Ravening Wolves: Ye shall
know them by their Fruits.*



THESE Words are a Caution given
by our blessed Saviour to his Disci-
ples, to have a care what Persons
they admitted to be their *Guides*, and
Instructors, in things pertaining to Religion.
That

That they should not blindly follow every one who would pretend to lead them, but should first diligently prove, and examine them: And know whether they were indeed the *true Ministers of Christ*; or whether they were not rather *False Prophets*, whose design was not to instruct, but to deceive: *Beware of False Prophets, which come to you in Sheeps Cloathing, but inwardly they are Ravening Wolves: Ye shall know them by their Fruits.*

In my Discourse upon which Words, I shall

I. Endeavour to give you a clear account of the true *meaning* of our Saviour in them. And having done this, I will proceed,

II. To shew you what *Use* we ought to make of them.

(1st.) In general; with relation to all such as shall at any time pretend to *preach the Gospel* of Christ to us.

(2^{dly}.) In particular; as they may be more immediately applied to the Subject, and Solemnity, of this Day.

And, I. Let us enquire, what is the true *meaning* of that *Caution* which our Saviour here gave to his Disciples: *Beware of False Prophets.*

In order whereunto, I shall distinctly consider these two things:

1st. Who they were whom our Saviour intended to represent to them, under the Name, and Character, of *False Prophets*?

2^{dly}. What those *Fruits* are, by which he directed them to discover, and to avoid them.

1st. As for the former of these, the Persons whom our Saviour here design'd to represent to his Disciples, under the Name, and Character, of *False Prophets*; they may be reduced to these two kinds: Either, 1st, Such as should pretend to set up themselves as Men *commissioned by God*, in an *extraordinary manner*, to reveal his Will to Mankind, tho' indeed they were never *sent by him*: Or, 2^{dly}, Such as should pretend only to *teach*, and *expound*, the *common Doctrine of Christ*; but yet under the colour of that, should deliver their own Imaginations; and so *preach themselves, and not the Lord Jesus*^a.

Of the *former* of these, our Saviour spake to his Disciples, *Matt. xxiv. 11, 24*. When he told them, that *False Christs*, and *False Prophets* should *arise*, and should *deceive many*^b: And therefore warn'd them not to be deluded by them.

Of the *latter* kind are all those who in the several Ages of the Church, have preached in the Name, and pretended to deliver only that pure Doctrine of Christ, which was deliver'd by him to his Apostles, and by them communicated to the Church; but yet have mingled their *own Er-*

^a 2 Cor. iv. 5.

^b Mark xiii. 22.

rours together with it: And by means thereof have brought in *damnable Heresies*, 2 *Pet.* ii. 1. scandalous to Christianity, and dangerous to the Souls of all those who have unhappily suffer'd themselves to be misled by them^c.

Now that those of this latter kind, no less than those of the foregoing, are truly comprehended under the Name, and Character, of *False Prophets*, the Language of the *New Testament* will not suffer us to doubt. Where *to prophesy* does commonly denote to *preach the Gospel of Christ*^d: And to be a *Prophet*, signifies no less to be a *Teacher* of the *Doctrine already revealed*^e, than to be a *Publisher* of such Things as were before unknown; and, for the Confirmation of which, he who did so, was therefore to be, in an extraordinary manner, both commissioned and inspired by God.

The truth is, tho' the former of these Significations of the Word *Prophet*, was the more common under the *Old Testament*; when such kind of Persons were wont to be frequently sent by God to Mankind; yet this latter seems to be the more proper, and standing import of it, under the *New*. And the additional Character which is here given to those of whom our Saviour spake, that they should come in *Sheeps Cloathing*, that is to say, under the habit and appearance of *Disciples*; in the Name of Christ, and as Pastors of

^c Act. x. 29, 30. 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2, 3.

^d Mat. vii. 22. x. 41. xxiii. 34. Luke xi. 50.

^e Rom. xii. 6. 1 Cor. xiii. 2. xiv. 22, &c.

his Flock; plainly shews that they were not to be the Publishers of any new Doctrine; but to pretend, at least, to teach that old ^f Religion, which our blessed Lord, the great *Shepherd of the Sheep*, once for all, deliver'd to the Saints. *Jude* 3.

So that however then I would not exclude the other signification of the Word *Prophet* from having been, in part, intended by our Saviour, in the Caution before us; and according to which, it is certainly our duty to *beware of False Prophets*; that is to say, of such as shall go about to preach a *new Religion, totally different from that* of the Gospel^g; (which was, in effect, the Case of some of the most early Hereticks, in the first Ages after Christ; and of that great Impostor *Mahomet* afterwards:) Yet I cannot but look upon the more general Design of our blessed Lord to have been, to caution us against those of whom we have commonly more need to *beware*; I mean, the *ordinary Preachers of the Gospel*. And concerning whom it is without Controversy our Duty, and should be our Care, to take heed that we do not suffer our selves to be misled by them: Whilst instead of delivering to us the pure Doctrine of Christ, they teach only their own Inventions; and, by so doing, both corrupt our

^f Heb. xiii. 20. 1 Pet. v. 4.

^g Act xxi. 28. Joseph. Antiqu. lib. xx. c. 2. De Bell. Jud. lib. v. c. 30. 38. Orig. Contr. Cels. l. 2. Epiph. adv. Hæres. lib. i. Tom. 2, &c.

Faith, and (without God's infinite Mercy,) expose us to everlasting Ruin and Destruction.

And this may suffice to shew, who the *False Prophets* are, of whom our Lord in the *Text*, requires us to *beware*. Let us consider,

2^{dly}. By what *Marks* we may *discover*, and so be enabled to *avoid* them.

Now the Rule laid down by our Saviour in order hereunto, and again repeated by him, *Ÿ. 20.* is this; *Ye shall know them by their Fruits.* And those may be of *two kinds*: Either 1st. The *Doctrine* which they preach, and would impose upon those to whom they deliver it, for the true Doctrine of Christ; whether with respect to *Faith*, or *Manners*; to what we are to *believe*, or what we are to *do*, in obedience to his Gospel. Or, 2^{dly}, By their *Fruits*, we may understand, the *Efficacy* of their *Doctrine* upon the Minds, and Consciences, of those who are guided by them; and the natural Tendency which it has, either to promote that Piety which our Saviour came into the World to teach; or to lead men into any Wickedness contrary thereunto.

These are the *Fruits* by which we may judge what the *Prophet* is who comes to us; whether he be indeed a *True Prophet*, and as such to be received by us; or whether he be only a *Wolf in Sheeps Cloathing*, and of whom we are therefore to beware. From all which we may now lay down these *three Rules*, as containing the summ of our Saviour's Advice to us, with relation to this Matter.

First:

First: That whosoever, in *Matters of Faith*^h, shall preach any Doctrine contrary to, or otherwise different from, that Doctrine which was taught by Christ to his Apostles, and by them deliver'd to the Church; (the Substance of which is fully, and clearly, contained in the Writings of the New Testament) is a *False Prophet*; and to be avoided by us as such.

Secondly: That whosoever, in respect of *Manners*, shall preach any Doctrines which are inconsistent with the Piety of the Gospel; or otherwise apt to corrupt the Morality of it; he does thereby shew himself to be a Deceiver, and an Impostor; and it is our Duty to beware of him as such.

Thirdly: If such a *Prophet* shall deliver this False Doctrine, (whether in the business of *Faith*, or *Manners*) not of his own Motion, but as commission'd by some *Church*, or *Society of Men calling themselves a Church*, so to do; then that *Church*, or *Society of Men*, which does commission him, must be look'd upon to be a *corrupt*, and *erroneous Church*; and be no less avoided by us than he who is so sent, or commissioned, by it.

And thus have I endeavour'd to give you a clear Account, of the *direction* of our blessed Saviour in the Words before us: I go on now to the Use I propos'd,

^h Gal. i. 8.

ⁱ Eph. v. 6. Coloss. ii, 18. 1 Tim. iv. 1, &c. 2 Tim. iii. 5, &c.

II. To make of this Caution ; (1st.) In general ; as it respects *all* those who shall, at any time, pretend to be our *Guides* in *Matters of Religion* : And, (2^{dly}.) In particular ; as it may be, in a more especial manner, applied to the Solemnity of this Day.

(1st.) Of the general Use we are to make of this *Caution* ; as it respects all those who shall, at any time, pretend to be our *Guides* in *Matters of Religion*.

And here, 1st, If it be our duty to *beware of False Prophets* ; and if the way of discovering them be, to *know them by their Fruits* ; that is, as I have now shewn, by the *Doctrines* which they teach, and the *Practices* which they allow of ; then it must follow, that it is not only lawful for us, but our duty, in obedience to this Command, to examine the Doctrine which our *Spiritual Guides* propose to us ; and to compare it with that of Christ, and his Apostles : And either to receive them as true, and lawful Pastors, if what they teach be agreeable thereunto ; or else to reject them as *False Prophets*, if it shall appear to be otherwise. And indeed, however some, the better to maintain their usurped Authority over the Consciences of Men, have set up another Method ; and told us, that the *Prophet* is to give credit, and authority, to the *Doctrine*, not the *Doctrine* to the *Prophet* ; and, in consequence thereof, have forbidden Men to examine what is deliver'd by them, and made them believe that it is sufficient that they have it from
such

such hands as can neither mistake themselves, nor mislead others: Yet not only our Reason directs us to a contrary Procedure, but the Holy Scriptures themselves every where exhort us to *examine* what is proposed to us; and not take any thing, at all Adventures, in a matter of such vast concern, as it must needs be to us, to be *guided a right* in those things which regard the Glory of God, and the Salvation of our Immortal Souls.

Hence it is that we are commanded, sometimes not to *believe every Spirit, but to try the Spirits whether they are of God; because many False Prophets are gone out into the World*, Jo. iv. 1. At other times, to *search the Scriptures*, Jo. v. 39. And of *our selves to judge the things that are right*, Luke xii. 57. And as for what concerns the Authority of any Man, or *Company of Men*, to the contrary; we are told by St. Paul, Gal. i. 9. *That tho' they* (the Apostles of Christ) *or an Angel from Heaven, should preach any other Gospel unto us than that which we have received, they should be accursed.* And if an *Angel from Heaven*, or an *Apostle*, should he rise from the dead, and preach to us, must not be received any farther than what he delivers shall appear to be agreeable to the Gospel of Christ; much less ought we not either without all examination to receive, or against the plain Authority of *Holy Scripture* to submit to, the Pretensions of designing Men; who the more they set up their *own Infallibility*, and decline the Tryal of *God's Word*, the more ought they

to be suspected by us; and the more narrowly to be enquired into, that we be not deceived by them.

But 2^{dly}. Since our Saviour deliver'd the *Caution* of the *Text*, not to his *Apostles* only, but to the whole company of his ^k *Disciples*; to all those who came to him, and offer'd themselves to be instructed by him; it will follow farther, that this Right of *examining* what is propos'd to us, in *Matters of Religion*, is not any ipecial Privilege of the Pastors, or Governours of the Church; but is the common Right and Duty of all Christians whatsoever: Who as they are all concern'd to be secure in what they believe, and Practise, in such Cases as these; so are they all required, in order thereunto, to *beware of False Prophets*, and to *try them by their Fruits*^l.

Now this may serve yet farther to shew the little regard we are to give to their Pretences who tell us, that the Judgment of these Things belongs only to the *Church*; that is, as some of them interpret it, to the *Pope*, as successor of St. *Peter*, and (if we will believe them) *Head* of the *Church*: As others understand it; to the *Bishops*, and *Chief Pastors* of the Church; and to them not separately, but conven'd together into a *Synod*; and that, again, not in any particular Church; but in the *Catholick*; to them, or their Deputies, lawfully met together, in a *general Council*.

^k Mat. v. 1. Luke vi, 17, 20.
^l Jo. iv. 1.

^l 1 Theff. v. 21.

For tho' it is not to be doubted, but that what is fairly debated, and orderly concluded upon, in such an Assembly; (where it is fully convened, and permitted freely to judge, and determine, according to the Holy Scriptures;) must needs be of more Authority, and probably may be more sure, than what is resolved by every single Christian apart: Yet, when all is done, as every particular Person is to answer to God for his own Soul, so he must examine, as far as he is able, both *what he Believes*, and *how he Practises*; and upon *what Grounds* he does both; and not follow any *Assembly*, tho' of never so much seeming Authority, contrary to that which is of much greater Authority than any *Humane Assembly* whatsoever can be, I mean, the *Word of God*. And it may as well be said that all the other Parts of Christian Piety, delivered by our Saviour in these Chapters^m, belong not to single Persons, or to ordinary Christians at all, but only to the whole Church, or at least, to the Pastors and Governors of it; as that this Command of *taking heed of False Prophets*, and of *knowing them by their Fruits*, is the Business of *such* only, and not the duty of every private Person.

But, 3^{dly}; and to conclude these general Reflections. If such be the case, that it is not only lawful for, but the Duty of, every Christian to *search the Scriptures*, and to examine what is proposed to him; and to satisfy himself whether

^m Mat. v, vi, vii.

it be the true Doctrine of Christ or no: Then it will follow farther, that if upon such a Proof of what is tender'd to us by any *Person*, or *Church* whatsoever, we should chance to be clearly, and evidently convinced, that they have departed themselves, and would draw away us, from the pure Faith of Christ, deliver'd to us in the holy Scriptures; it is our duty to take heed that we do not follow them in their Apostasy; but resolve rather to forsake *them*, than to abandon that *Gospel*, which both they, and we, are commanded to adhere unto.

That it is possible for Men either by Interest to be corrupted; by Prejudices to be byas'd; or thro' Infirmary to be deceived; and by any, or all of these Means, to fall away from the Purity of the christian Truth; both the *Condition of Humane Nature* assures us, and the very *Caution* of the *Text* does evidently suppose.

That by a careful Attention, and diligent Enquiry into the Doctrine deliver'd to us in the Holy Scriptures, we may be able to discover when they do so; and to distinguish between Truth and Falshood; Right and Wrong, as to these Matters; not only our Saviour's Command to do this, but the plainness wherewith most of those things are delivered, which make up the sum of what is necessary for us to believe, and do, in order to our Salvation, effectually shew.

But then to what purpose should we trouble our selves to *Search the Scriptures*, and to understand our Religion, and to know that our
Guides

Guides deal fraudulently with us ; if after all, there is no remedy : But we must follow our *Church*, and the *Pastors* of it, whether they teach us the true doctrine of Christ ; or whether they lead us into damnable Heresies, destructive of the very Fundamentals of it.

And yet how confidently do some Men here also, rise up against us ; and tell us, that we must believe them before our *own Reason* ; nay, and (in effect) before *God* Himself ? That 'tis *Schism*, and *Heresie*, and I know not what besides, to doubt of, or differ with them, in any thing that they require us to believe. And that much better were it for us to shut our eyes altogether, and go on blindfold under their Conduct ; than to follow the clearest Light that *Scripture*, *Reason*, or even *Sense* it self, can give us, in opposition to their Errors.

But let them assume what Authority they please to themselves, and raise what Clamours they can against us ; when all is done, this Conclusion will remain firm as Heaven, and clear as any first principle of *Science* ; that if the ⁿ *Scriptures* be, as we all agree that they are, *the Word of God* ; and were written for our Instruction ; then we must follow the Conduct of them : And hold fast to the truth which they deliver, tho' not only a Company of assuming Men, calling themselves the Church, (but upon what Grounds, no body could ever learn,) and pretending to infallibility, (in de-

ⁿ Rom. xv. 4. 2 Tim. iii. 16. 2 Pet. i. 19.

spight of the grossest Errors; but the whole World should conspire together to oppose us in it.

And thus have I shewn you, what that *General Use* is, that we ought all of us to make, of this Command of our Saviour, to *beware of False-Prophets*; and, to *know them by their Fruits*. I proceed,

(2dly) To that more *particular Application* which I propos'd to make of it, to the Subject of this Day's Solemnity.

We are now met together to bless God for those wonderful *Deliverances*, which He has twice afforded us of this *Nation* upon *this very Day*, from the Designs of those who are the professed *Enemies* of our *Religion*; and who have never ceased, from the first beginning of the *Reformation* among us, to do what in them lies to subvert *That*, and to destroy us upon the account of it.

But of all the measures that were ever taken by them in order thereunto, never was there any more remarkable than that which was intended to have been executed on *this Day*; had not God, by a miracle of his Providence, discovered, and disappointed it.

A design it was, so black, and horrid, that we find many among themselves ashamed to own it. And therefore, ° they either altogether deny that

* *Papists Apology*, p 31. (With the Answer) *Comp.* p. 34. *Calendar. Catholicum*, An. 1662, 5 Nov. *Hen. Morus*, Soc. Jesu *Provinciæ Anglic. Hist.* l. 7. Sect. 19, 21.

there was ever any such *Plot* carried on by Those of their Communion : Or else, pretend, that it was only a private attempt of a few desperate Men of their Religion ; censured, and condemn'd for it, by all the better, and more sober Members of their Church.

And indeed, far be it from me to charge the whole Body of our English Papists, either with the knowledge of this Conspiracy at the first, or with the approving of it afterwards. I am sensible that^p several among them have freely declared their abhorrence of the *Design* its self; and of the very *Principles* on which it was founded. But yet when all is done, certain it is that both the *Doctrine* on which it was established, has been^q confirm'd by those of the highest Authority in the *Roman Church* : And that their greatest Men have not only given their Approbation to such *Attempts*; ^r but have favoured those who were the principal *Actors* in Them.

Here then let us fix our selves, and try the Cause between them, and us. If the *Doctrines* of the *Romish* Church, with relation to those whom they call *Hereticks*, and their *Practices* towards them, be agreeable to the *Gospel* of *Christ* ;

^p See *Widdrington* contr. *Suarez*. pag. 12. & 153.

^q Concil. *Lateran.* 3. Can. 27. Concil. *Lateran.* 4. Can. 3. Concil. *Lugd.* 1. Lab. Tom. 11. Col. 640, &c. Concil. *Constant.* Sess. 45. Mart. PP. Bull. &c. p. 259. Tom. 12. Lab. See more below.

^r As *Tesmond* & *Gerrard*, who were both concern'd in the *Powder-Plot*. *Widdrington* contra *Schulken*, p. 151.

let us allow them to be, thus far, *True Prophets*, and approved by their *Fruits*. But else, if neither their *Doctrines*, nor *Practices*, in this respect, can be reconciled with the *Spirit of Christianity*; we must then pronounce them to be *False-Teachers*, and conclude that they have been justly rejected by us as such.

And 1st, As for the *Doctrines* of those of the *Church of Rome*, towards such whom they call *Hereticks*, they are to this Effect :

^s That theirs is the *Catholick Church*, with which all Christians are bound to Communicate; to which alone all the promises of the Gospel do belong; and out of which there is no Salvation,
^t That all who differ from them, and forsake their Communion, are *Schismaticks*, and *Hereticks*; Enemies to God; and Apostates from the Church, and Faith of Christ.

^t That this Church has therefore a Right to pronounce a Sentence of *Excommunication* against them: And that being, by that means, cut off from the Body of Christ, they are, in the next place, to be cast out of all Civil Society too; and be put to death, unless they shall abjure their Heresy, and return again to their Communion.

^s Concil. *Constant.* Sess. 45. Decretal. de Hæret. l. 5. tit. 7. c. 13.

^t Concil. *Lateran.* 4. Can. 3. See *Foulis* Popish Treasons, Book 2. c. 6. Sect. 13. The Bull of P. *Paul III.* against King *Henry VIII.* Bellarm. de Laicis. l. 3. c. 21. Decretal. de Hæret. lib. 5. tit. 7. c. 13. Vid. Bullam. Cœnæ Dom.

" That this *Excommunication* the *Pope* has power to pronounce, not only upon private Persons, but upon whole Cities, and Countries; upon Kings and Subjects: And that this being done, they also may be prosecuted with the Sword, and be rooted from off the face of the Earth.

* That for the better effecting hereof, his *Holiness* (as they call him) has power to absolve Princes from their Oaths of Government to their Subjects; and Subjects from their Obligations of Fidelity to their Princes: To dispose of Kingdoms; and transfer them from one State or Family to another. ^y And that having done this, that Person, or State, to whom the *Pope* shall have given such an heretical Kingdom, has from thenceforth a just Right to enjoy it, and may lawfully endeavour by any means to make himself Master of it.

^u Sanders de Visib. Monarch. p. 730, 734. Parry's Confession, out of Allen's Book, p. 17. Thuanus's Hist. lib. 135. p. 1206. C. D. Becanus contr. Angl. p. 120. Add; Pope Pius V. Bull against Queen Eliz. &c. Decretal. de Hæret. l. 5. tit. 7. c. 13. Concil. Avenionens, An. 1210. Bellarm. Resp. ad Apolog. pro Juram. fidel. p. 9, 10:

* See this proved at large from their own Authors, by Foulis History of Popish Treasons, Book 2. c. 1, 2, 5, 6. Du Moulin's Answer to Philanax Anglicus, cap. 4. Bp. Barlow's Popish Principles pernicious to Protestant Princes; to which, add the Bulls of Pope Paul III. against King Henry VIII. Of Pius V. against Q. Eliz. Decret. c. 15. qu. 5. cap. Nos Sanctorum.

^y Card. Allen's Admonition to the Nobility and People of England; with his Answer to Stanley's Letter, An. 1587. Becanus Controv. Anglic. c. 3. q. 2, 3. Suarez Defens. fid. Cathol. Lib. 3. c. 23. cui titulus: Pontificem summum potestate coercivâ in reges uti posse usque ad depositionem etiam à regno, l. 6. c. 2. Sect. 7. Bellarm. de Rom. Pont. l. 5. c. 6, 8. Idem de potestate summ. Pont. contr. Barclaium: in Prolegomen.

^z Lastly:

² Lastly: That if this cannot be done by open force, and it be for the Interest of their Religion that some other Course should be taken; any *King* or *Prince*, so excommunicated, as is aforesaid, by the *Pope*, may lawfully be *kill'd* by any private Person; or otherwise, be *deposed* from his *Government*: And another set up to defend their Religion, and to extirpate, what they call Heresie, out of that Country.

This is the Substance of what is taught by those of the *Church of Rome*, with relation to such as they stile *Hereticks*: that is to say, in other Words, to all those who are not of their Persuasion. And

2dly, For their *Practises*, in Conformity thereunto; tho' you are but too well able of your selves to recount them, yet I will call to your remembrance a few Particulars, that may suffice to represent them to you.

I should perhaps be thought to look back too far, should I relate to you the^a barbarous Butcheries committed by them about the xiiiith Cen-

² *Jul. Cas. Bullenger. Hist. l. 6. p. 233.* I speaking of Parry says, *De Theologis quarit, an jure Tyrannus Pontificiis diris devotus, necari possit? Illi, posse, responderunt.* See Card. Como's Letter to the same purpose, below. *Suarez. Defens. fid. Cathol. lib. 6. c. 4. Sect. 14, 18. Mariana de Rege & Regis Institut. l. 1. c. 6, 7. Thuan. Hist. l. 111. p. 517, 518, 520.*

^a See *Usserius de Christianarum Eccles. Success. c. 10. Cracken-thorp contra Spalatensem, c. 18. Sect. 19. Mat. Paris. ad An. 1534.* says, The Number that was slain was infinite.

tury, at the preaching of that ^b bloody Monk, their now glorious St. *Dominick*: And the greatest of whose merit, seems to have been this, that (as the Histories of those times inform us,) he preached above an hundred thousand innocent Men out of their lives. A most *Apostolical Preacher* no doubt! and worthy of the Honour, which in acknowledgment of his Merits they have thought fit to confer upon him; that for the good Service he had done in that cruel Mission, the Inquisition, then begun by him, (that most lively Pattern of Hell upon Earth) should be entrusted to the Monks of his ^c Order; and who, in the management of it, for the most part, do not at all degenerate from the fiery Zeal of their Anti-Christian Founder.

If from those we pass on to the *Protestants* of *France*, it is hardly to be said what ^d infinite Numbers of them, in a very few Years, fell a Sacrifice to the *Romish Fury*. To which if we add the Persecutions they have since undergone,

^b Whose Severity the very Inquisitors themselves boast of. *Ludov. à Param. de Orig. & Progress. Inquis. l. 2. c. 2. n. 4. Limburg. Hist. Inquisit. l. 1. c. 10.*

^c Vid. Leg. 1. *Fred. II. apud Limburg. Hist. Inquis. c. 12. l. 1. Et Hist. progres. Inquisit. per totum lib.*

^d *Thuan. Hist. ad An. 1572. Propinque Hist. de France, liv. 29. D'Aubigné Hist. Univers. part. 2. l. 1. c. 4, &c. Mezeray Hist. Charles IX. &c. Hist. des Martyrs; à Geneve, 1619. l. 7. &c. An. 1557, &c. l. 10. An. 1572. Ofsand. Hist. Eccles. ad An. 1557, 1560, 1567, 1568. Lampadius Mellific. Hist. par. 3. p. 475, &c. 480.*

within our own Memories, to the utter ruine of their Religion in that Country; we shall need no other Evidence to convince us, what the true *Spirit of Popery* is; and what we are to expect from it, if ever it should happen to prevail any more among us.

What havock has been made of the *Evangelical Churches*, in the other Parts of *Europe*, within these few Years, is too fresh in your Memories to need a Repetition. As for our *own Country*, the Laws still extant shew us, what *severe Acts* were pass'd against the Reformed, ever since the time of King *Henry IV.* and our Histories tell us, with what rigour they were put in execution. And the short period of Queen *Mary's* Reign, shall I hope be a lasting, as it was a burning, and shining Monument, of what our Fore-Fathers underwent; and of what we ought to fear, should they ever come to have the same Power in their Hands, that they then had, they would again do, to destroy us.

But to leave these vulgar Instances of the *Romish Cruelties*, and come to those of a higher Nature; in which Princes have been concern'd; and for whom, if they chance to oppose their Interest, they have as little regard as for the meanest of the People.

It would engage me on too large a Subject to speak of the several *Emperors*, and *Kings*, who were either murder'd, or deposed, by the *Pope* and his Faction, before the time of the *Reformation*.

tion. Let the ^c Histories of *Europe* speak this to you: Scarce a Country of which is destitute of some Instance or other of this Nature. I shall only point out to you a few Particulars, of many, since that time; and those such as are no more to be denied, than they are to be excused, by them.

^f When that desperate Wretch *James Clement*, undertook the Murder of King *Henry III.* of *France*; the *Prior* of his *Convent* encouraged him in it, and gave him the very Knife with which he did it: And when the News of this horrid Fact was brought to *Rome*, ^g Pope *Sixtus* the Fifth, in an open Consistory approved the Deed, and in very extravagant Terms applauded the doer of it.

And when, afterwards ^h *John Chastell* attempted, in like manner, to assassinate King *Henry IV.* and was justly condemn'd by the *Parliament* of *Paris* for it; their Proceedure was so heinously

^c See King *James's* Apology for the Oath of Allegiance; in his Works Fol. p. 272, &c. *Becanus* Contr. Angl. p. 144. Edit. Mogunt. 1613. *Foulis* Romish Treasons, at large, Books 3, 4, 5, 6. from all sorts of Histories: Vid. *Platinam* in vit. *Bonifacii VIII.* &c. *Bellarmin.* de potest. P. contra. *Barclaium*.

^f See *Foulis* Popish Treasons, l. 8. c. 6. *Histoire des derniers Troubles de France*, An. 1589. *Hist. d'Aubigne*, An. 1589. Tom. 3. l. 2. c. 22. *Thuan.* Hist. l. 95. Et lib. III. p. 520.

^g See the whole Speech in *Foulis* Popish Treasons, Book 8. c. 6.

^h See *Mezeray's* Hist. of *France*, An. 1594. *Histoire de Troubles de France*, An. 1594. See the Sentence of the *Parliament* against him, at large. *Hist. d'Aubigne*. To. 3. l. 4. c. 4. Vid. *Inscriptiones* Pyramid. contra. *Jesuitas* sceleris *Authores*. *Thuan.* Hist. l. III. an. 1594.

resented at *Rome*, that they caused their ⁱ *Sentence* to be put into their Catalogue of *prohibited Books*; that is to say, of such as they thought not fit for any Member of their Communion to read.

But I will not look any farther Abroad for the Examples of such Villainies, as our own History affords us but too great a plenty of at Home.

King *Henry VIII*, had his private Quarrels with the *Popes* of his time. He saw himself tricked, and abused by them; and he bravely resolved not to suffer a *Foreign Bishop* any longer to insult it over an *English King*. And tho' in all other respects he continued to his dying day a zealous *Papist*, yet for this one piece of Rebellion only against that proud Prelate, he was *excommunicated* by *Pope Paul III*; his *Subjects* were *absolved* from their *Oath of Allegiance*; and *commanded* to use their utmost Endeavours to *depose* him, and *expel* him out of his *Dominions*^k.

What *Paul III* did to King *Henry VIII*, *Pope Pius V*, renewed against his Daughter, Queen *Elizabeth*^l. He declared her to be an *Heretick* and a *favourer of Hereticks*: And therefore *deprived* her of her *Crown*; *absolved* her *Subjects* from their *Allegiance*; and *forbade* them

ⁱ Titulo, *Arrestum contra Joannem Castellum*: And again Oratio *M. Antonii Arnaldi*, &c. *Arrestum contra Joannem Castellum*.

^k See the Bull: *Bullar.* Tom. i. p. 704.

^l See the whole History related by *Saunders de Visibl. Monarch*, p. 730. n. 2037. And by *Girolamo Catena*, in his *Life of Pius V.* p. 112, &c. Et *Append.* p. 109, &c.

to obey her, on pain of *Excommunication*. And all this he did meerly upon the account of her Religion. For before that time, (which was the twelfth year of her Reign) not one ^m *Papist* had suffer'd for his *Religion*: When ⁿ *Felton* fixing up this *Bull* against the Bishop of *London's Gate*, and justifying the Fact, was the first of that Party, condemn'd, and executed for it.

Being thus encouraged by the *Popes* Authority, the *Romanists* of those times were from thenceforth scarce ever out of some Contrivance, or other, to destroy her°. *Parry*, one of the chief of those who undertook to Murder her, had not only the *Pope's* consent so to do; but, in consideration of it, had his *Holiness's* Blessing sent from *Rome* to him, with a *plenary Indulgence* for all his Sins; and the assurance of an extraordinary Crown of Glory in Heaven, for the barbarous Villany he had undertook to commit on Earth.

^m Nor yet meerly for that, either before, or after; King *James's* Premonition, p. 336. Not thirty Priests in all Queen *Elizabeth's* Reign suffer'd for Treason, and for Religion not one. Sir *Edward Cokes's* Speech at the Arraignment of the Gun-powder Conspirators.

ⁿ *Sanders* de Visib. Monarch. p. 734. Where he makes *Felton* a Martyr. *Spondan.* Contin. *Baron.* ad An. 1570. §. 4. *Cambden,* *Elizab.* An. 1570.

^o *Cambd. Eliz.* An. 1585. Cardinal *Como's* Letter, of Jan. 30. 1584. *Le concede* (the Pope) *sua Benedictione, plenaria Indulgenza & Remissioni di tutti li peccati, assicurando si che olire il merito che n'havera in cielo vuole anco sua Santua constituirsi debitore, &c.* And adds, *Metta dunque ad Effetto li suoi Santi & Honorati pensieri; i. e.* To kill the Queen.

This Enterprife failing; they next resolved upon a *Foreign^p Invasion*: And the King of *Spain* was persuaded, by Pope *Pius V*, to engage in it. But that also miscarrying, their *private Attempts* were again renewed; and still some *Priest* or other, in every one of them, to encourage and sanctify the Assassination.

It would engage me in too long a Discourse to speak particularly of the Treasons of *Arden*, and *Sommerville*; of *Hesket*, and *Lopez*; of *Cullen* and *Tork*; of *Squire* and *Babington^q*: Of the Designs of the Duke of *Norfolk*; the Earl of *Westmorland*, and many others; who either by Sword, or Poison; by private Attempts, or public Insurrections; endeavoured to deprive her both of her Crown and Life.

I will only observe, that what the other *Popes* had in vain attempted here in *England*; ^r Pope *Gregory XIII*, and *Clement VIII*, no less encouraged in *Ireland*: Both abetting the Rebellions which were raised there, and engaging the King of *Spain*, once more, to endeavour her destruction.

^p See *Foulis* Popish Treasons, Book 7. c. 6. *Girolamo Catena* Vita de *Pio V*. In which the Pope was so zealous, that he was for pawning the Plate of the Church, and coming himself in Person, if need were, to further it. p. 117.

Cambd. Eliz. An. 1588. Watson. quodlib. p. 239. 246. Artic. 6, 7.

^q See *Watson's* Important Considerations, &c. Reprinted, Lond. 1675, 4°. *Bristow* makes them all Martyrs; 15 Motive, p. 72. c. 73. For the Historical Part see *Foulis's* Popish Treasons, Book 7. c. 5, 7. *Cambd. Eliz. An. 1595, 1598, &c. 1602.*

^r *Foulis's* Popish Treasons, Book 9. c. 3. *Cambd. Eliz. An. 1578, 1579, &c.*

Whilst the *Queen of Scots* lived, who was a zealous Papist, ^s the pretence for several of these Attempts then was, ('as their Excuse has been since) that she had the better Title to the *Crown of England*. But that unfortunate Princess being gone, and *Queen Elizabeth* now grown old; ^v all possible Endeavours were made by those very Persons, (with the *Pope* at their Head) to *exclude* the *Son*, who would be thought to have had so much *Zeal* for the *Mother*.

In this first Attempt the *Jesuits* seemed unwilling to ^w engage: But then, to do them right, I must observe, that it was not out of any checks of Conscience, any dislike they had to such an Enterprize; but because they had another Design of their own in hand; which, it seems, was this of the *Gun-Powder Conspiracy*. A Treason of so horrid, and dismal a Complexion, that the transcendent Cruelty of it stagger'd some of the *Conspirators* themselves, and proved the happy Means of our deliverance from it: Whilst the desire of one among them to save his Friend from that deadly Blow; by the Providence of

^s *Catena* Lettre de Pio V. p. 329.

^t See the Papists Apology, (the Edit. with the Answer) 1675. p. 23.

^v *Clement VIII.* See *Cambden. Eliz. An.* 1600, 1602. *Doleman's* Conference about the next Succession to the Crown. *Tortur. Torti.* p. 188, &c. 197, 278. *Thuanus*, l. 135. p. 1205, 1214, A. King *James's* Apology, p. 273. *Casaubon* Epist. ad *Front. Ducaum.* inter. Epist. p. 750. Edit. 4^o. 1656. Sir *Edward Coke's* Plea. Hist. Gun-powder Treason. (8^o. Lond. 1678.) p. 92, &c.

^w See *Watson's* Confession: *Casaub.* Epist. ad *Front. Ducaum*, p. 752, 753.

God, discovered the whole Design, and saved both the *King*, and *Parliament* from destruction.

We ought not to wonder, if the better to conceal such a Conspiracy as this, but ^x few were admitted to a particular knowledge of it: ^y Tho' it was generally discoursed among the whole Party, that something was in agitation for the Interest of their Cause; and to which they were to be ready to lend their utmost Assistance, as soon as Matters should be ripe for it. Yet even among those few who knew of it, ^z Father *Garnet*, the Provincial of the *Jesuits* was one; and that not in *Confession*, as some now pretend, but by way of *Consultation*, as himself, (at last) ingenuously acknowledged. ^a That several others of the Society

^x About twenty, whereof five were Jesuits. See Popish Apol. p. 34. *Casaub.* Epist. ad Front. Ducum. p. 755.

^y King *James's* Premonition, p. 291.

^z *Thuanus* owns this: Hist. lib. 135. p. 1213. D. And the publick Acts of this Conspiracy undeniably confirm it. See King *James's* Premonition, p. 334, 335. Bishop *Andrews* at large proves it from *Garnet's* own Confession, *Tortura Torti*, p. 281, &c. 285, 286. So does *Isaac Casaubon*, Epist. ad Front. Ducum, p. 757, 761, 773, 774, 775. Add Sir *Edward Coke's* Arraignment of *Garnet*, p. 168, &c. And the Relation of his Execution, lb. p. 225.

^a *Historia Pontifical.* Part 5. l. i. c. 11. says that *Fawks* being in *Flanders*, *T descubrio su empresa à personas Ecclesiasticas y de su Nacion, para hazer les ayunar y rogar a Dios, que su fin llegasse a efecto.* *Bulenger* confirms it, Hist. l. 12. p. 369. where speaking of *Winter* and *Fawks*, *Oeno Jesuita*, says he, *consilia aperiunt; qui pietatis studium laudat.* And p. 370. speaking of three others, among whom, *Garnet* one; says; *Rex cognito tres Jesuitas—Conjuratōnis hujus nefaria stabella fuisse.*—*Thuan.* Hist. p. 1206. E. lib. 135. *Gerard* the Jesuit gave them the Oath of Secrecy; and the Sacrament upon it. *Tesmund* confirm'd *Bates* Conscience in

ciety were acquainted with it, may from undoubted Proofs be made appear. Give me leave to add, what ^b some have farther affirm'd; that *Fawks* himself, the Villain who was to have executed the Treason, was not long before at *Rome*, in Conference with some considerable ^c Persons there; and had three *Bulls* ready to have been publish'd, had the Design succeeded, but that this failing they were suppressed.

And here then let us stop, and not proceed to any following Instances of their Cruelty, and Perfidiousness: But from what has been already alledged, both of their *Doctrines*, and *Practices*, as to these Matters; go on, finally to consider, Whether such *Principles*, and such *Actions*, can ever be reconciled, either with the *Spirit*, or *Rules*, of Christianity. And,

1st. Let them tell us, if they can, where in all the Scriptures of the New Testament, either the Title, or Promises of the *Catholick Church*, are appropriated to the *Roman Church*; or indeed to any other *particular Church*, or *Society of Christians*, whatsoever: Or what reason can be given for that Fundamental Arrogance, on which

in it; *Rei merito demonstrato*: Ib. p. 1207. C. See *Winter's* Confession about *Owen* to the same Effect: *King James's Works*, p. 232. Add to this, my Lord *Stafford's* Declaration, at his Tryal, to the same Effect, p. 53. *Mezeray's Hist. of France*, An. 1605. *King James's* Premonition, p. 291, 335. *Bishop Andrew's Tortura Torti*, p. 280. *Casaub. Epist. ad Front. Ducaum*, p. 775. *Sir Edward Coke's* Arraignment of the Conspirators, p. 96, 104, 105, 113. His Arraignment of *Garnet*, p. 166.

^b *Foulis* Popish Treasons, Book 10. c. 2.

^c *Bishop Andrews* ad *Bellarmin. Resp.* c. 5. p. 113.

all the rest of their Pretences are built, why *they*, any more than *we*, should be called, or accounted, *Christ's Catholick Church upon Earth*?

The Truth is, it is a contradiction in terms for either of us to assume to our selves such a Character. The *Catholick Church*, is the *whole Church*; of which every *particular Church*, (as the *Church of England*, the *Church of Rome*, &c.) are Parts. And to say that any *one* of these, exclusive to *all others*, is the *Catholick Church*; is to say, that a *Part* is the *Whole*; which, I think, is as plain a contradiction as can well be affirmed by any.

Nay, but what if the *Church of Rome* be so far from being THE *Catholick*, or *Universal Church*, that it is not so much as *A Catholick*, that is, any *Sound*, or *Orthodox*, *Part* of the *Church of Christ*? Let me not be thought, to speak any thing with a design to raise in your minds a wrong notion against any: But for the sake of Truth, and out of the concern which I have for your immortal Souls, I must freely declare; that, after the best examination I have been able to make into her Principles, and Constitution; I do, in my conscience, believe the *Roman Church*, as it is at present established, in Matters of *Faith*, *Worship*, *Morals*, and *Government*; to be by far the most corrupted of any Christian Church, that I know of, in the *World*; and in which *Salvation* can the *most hardly*, if at all, be obtain'd. But

2^{dly}. Were the *Church of Rome* all that she pretends to be; and *Our Church* all that ever it has been call'd by it: Yet how comes this to give them a *Civil Authority* over us? *Christ* meddled not with *Mens Temporal Interests*: He taught no Doctrines of Cruelty and Uncharitableness. He *founded* no *Dominion in Grace*: Nor ever pretended to *depose Kings*, and *give away Kingdoms*. On the contrary, we know, how he would not so much as arbitrate in a private Controversy: *Luke xii. 14.* But declared freely, that *his Kingdom* was not of *this World*; *Jo. xviii. 36.* Nor were his Disciples to expect any thing beyond other Men, except it were Troubles, and Losses, and Persecutions, in it. *Mat. x. Luke ix. 23. Jo. xv. 20. xvi. 2, &c.*

Hence we read that when upon the account of his adherence to the *Temple of Jerusalem*, (which was plainly a *Religious Concern*) a certain Village of the *Samaritans* denied him the common Humanity of a Nights Lodging; and some of his Disciples were so hot upon it, as to desire him to revenge himself by *Fire from Heaven* for the Affront; all the Answer they got was this Reproof, which one would have thought might alone have been sufficient to silence all these kind of Pretensions for ever, That *they knew not what manner of Spirit they were of*; *Luke ix. 55.* For, says he, *the Son of Man came not to destroy Mens lives, but to save them.* But

3^{dly}. Our Saviour Christ, has not only no where encouraged any Proceedings of this kind, but has every where delivered such Doctrines, as are utterly irreconcilable with them. That *we must be subject to Principalities and Powers, and obey Magistrates*, Tit. iii. 1. That we must do this, *not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake*: Rom. xiii. 5. That we must *Love our Enemies*; must *bless them that curse us*; *do good to them that hate us*; and *pray for them that despitefully use us, and persecute us*. Mat. v. 44. That we must *not avenge our selves*; but *leave that to him, of whom it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the LORD*. Rom. xii. 19. That we must *not root up the Tares before the Time*, but *suffer them to grow till the Harvest*; and that then the Separation shall be made by God, and not by us. Mat. xiii. 29, 30. That we must *bear with those who are weak in the Faith*; must *instruct them in Meekness*; and endeavour to *convert them from the Error of their Way, that they may be saved*. Rom. xv. 1. Gal. vi. 1. 1 Thess. v. 14. 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25, 26. Jam. v. 19.

These are the Doctrines of the Gospel: And accordingly we know how our Religion conquered the World, not by *doing*, but by *suffering*: Not by *disturbing Kingdoms*, and *overthrowing of Governments*; but by *patiently submitting to all the Evil that the Rage of Men, or Malice of the Devil, could bring upon the Professors of it*.

And

And when this is so, what can we conclude but that certainly either the *Holy Scriptures* have given us a very wrong Account of the Doctrine of Christ; and that neither the *Apostles*, nor those who were instructed by them, understood their *own Rights*, and what *Authority* their *Ecclesiastical Character* gave them over *Princes*, and *Countries*; at least in order to *Religion*: Or that, if they did, then these Men in *teaching*, and *acting*, as they do, in these Matters, must have utterly departed from the Truth of Christianity; and have only the *Name* of *Prophets*; the *Cloathing* of *Sheep*; whilst in reality they are *ravening Wolves*.

Which being thus resolved, I do not see what other Conclusion we can draw from these Premises, than that which our Saviour, in the *Text*, recommends to us; which is, to *beware of them*.

And indeed so we have all the Reason in the World to be, whether we consider our Souls, or Bodies; the *Interests of this present Life*, or the *Hope of that which is to come*.

For, *First*, As to the *concern* of our *future State*; if it be possible for any Errors to *destroy Salvation*, which are not expressly contrary to the *Fundamentals* of *Christianity*; (tho' in the natural Consequence of them, they do plainly overthrow the chiefest of them;) then I am persuaded that the *Errors* of the *Church of Rome*, will, of all others, be found the most likely so to do.

And,

And, for the *other thing* mentioned, our *present Interests*; how far they must be affected by the return of *Popery* again among us; both the *Encroachments* it^d formerly made upon our *Civil Rights* and *Liberties*; and the *Pretensions* it^e still keeps on foot against us, more than against any other *Country*, or *People* besides; not to say any thing of its *common Principles* of *Tyranny*, and *Slavery*, ruinous to *Societies*, as well as dangerous to *private Persons*, and *Families*; may suffice to convince us.

Let us then, upon all these Accounts, heartily bless God, who (upon this same *Day*) has twice delivered us out of its Power: And let us earnestly beseech him, that he would still continue to defend us, from ever falling any more under it. And tho' the *Petition* has too long been left out of our *Liturgy*, yet let it never depart out of our Minds, but be often the Subject of our private Supplications to Almighty God, both for our *Religion*, and for our *Countries* sake,

^d For which, see Sir Roger Twisden's *Histor. Vindication of the Church of England*, &c. which largely shews it, chap. 1, 2.

^e See Card. Bellarm. *Apolog. pro Resp. ad Jacob. Reg. c. 3.* where he affirms the *Pope* to have a *direct Dominion* over the Kingdoms of *England* and *Ireland*; *Ita ut Rex, tanquam secundarius Dominus*, holds his Realms of him — The same is affirmed by Cardinal *Allen*, in his *Admonition to the Nobility*: That without the *Pope's Confirmation*, no Man can lawfully take the *Crown*, or be accounted *King of England*. They both took it from the *Pope's own Mouth*; who before his College of Cardinals declared, That the *King of England* was his *Vassal*; nay, in truth, his *Slave*. *Mat. Paris*, ad Ann. 1253.

**From the Tyranny of the Bishop of
Rome, and his detestable Enormi-
ties: Good Lord deliver us^f.**

^f See the first and second Book of King *Edward VI.* in the Li-
tany.



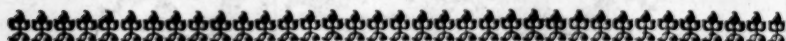
SERMON

S E R M O N III.

Preached before the

House of Lords,

A T T H E

Abbey-Church in *Westminster*,On *Monday, Nov. 5. 1705.*

MATT. vii. 15, 16.

Beware of False Prophets, which come to you in Sheeps-Cloathing, but inwardly they are Ravening Wolves: Ye shall know them by their Fruits.



Have already taken occasion, upon a former return of this Solemnity, ^a to discourse upon the *Subject Matter* of these Words. I have shewn who the *False Prophets* here spoken of are? And what

^a Sermon upon the 5th of *November*, Printed Anno. 1699.

the *Fruits* by which we are directed, or rather commanded, to discover them? That by the *former* we are to understand not so much those who *preach another Gospel*; whether different from, or contrary to, the Gospel of Christ; as those whom St. *Peter*, expounding the very Word of the *Text*, calls *False Teachers*, 2 Pet. ii. 1. and tells us, should one Day rise up in the Church of Christ, and *privily bring in damnable Heresies*. And as for the *latter*, the *Fruits* whereby we may know them, that they are of two kinds: Their ^b *Doctrine*, and their ^c *Practices*: The *Principles* which they profess; and the natural effect of those *Principles* upon the Manners, and Actions of those who receive them, and conduct themselves by the Measures of them. That by these, as we easily may; so it is both our *Right*, and our *Duty*, to *try*, and to be *beware* of, *False Prophets*. It is our *Right* as we are *Men*; endued with Reason, and therefore not to be led blindfold, in a Matter of the highest concern to us, either against Reason, or without it. It is our *Duty* as we are *Christians*; furnish'd with sufficient Means to know what the true Faith, and Doctrine, of Christ is; and obliged to follow it; and caution'd to beware of such as would draw us away from it: *Beloved*, says St. *John*, *Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spi-*

^b 1 Tim. i. 19, 20. 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18. Titus iii. 10. 1 Jo. iv. 1, 2. 2 Jo. 7, 10.

^c Acts xx. 29. 2 Tim. iii. 2, &c. Tit. i. 11, 16. 2 Pet. ii. 3, 10. Jud. 8, 11.

rits whether they are of God; because many False Prophets are gone out into the World, 1 Jo. iv. 1.

Having thus established not only *our Right*, but *our Duty*, in this Particular from the *Authority* of the *Text*; I next proceeded from the *Solemnity* of the *Day*, to make that particular Application, which I was obliged to do, of it. I shew'd what the *Doctrine* of the *Church of Rome* is, with respect to those who differ from it; and how scandalous, and unchristian her *Treatment* of them has been. That according to the one, they ought neither to be pitied of Men, nor pardoned by God: Neither to have any Mercy shewn them in this World, nor any Hope left them in the World which is to come. And as for the other, their *Behaviour* towards them; that it has fully come up to, I had almost said, even exceeded, their very *Principles*, in cruelty and inhumanity. That they have ransacked Sea and Land for Torments, to wreck their Malice, and Hatred against them. That Prisons, and Gallies, and Dungeons, have been the Habitation; the Stake, the Wheel, and the Gibbet, the Portion of Christ's Disciples under Popish, no less than under Pagan, Tyranny. And what Labours, what Watchings, what Fastings; what Cold, and Nakedness; to speak all in one Word, what Tryals, worse than Death, they have undergone, before they have been admitted to the benefit of Dying; the numerous Accounts that have been published of their Sufferings abundantly inform us.

Such

Such is the *Doctrine*, such has been the *Practice*; and we have good Reason to believe, that such *will ever be* the *Behaviour*, of *those* of the *Church of Rome* towards *us* of the *Reformed Religion*. The *Conspiracy of this Day*, how black and detestable soever it may appear, and no doubt deserves to be reputed by us; was but the natural result of their known Principles, and a true Image of their inward Sentiments and Affections towards us. By *this* they would have sent the whole Representative Body of the Realm quick into Hell: And by *those* they do declare, that as Hereticks, and Enemies to their Doctrine and Authority, we all ought, by any means to be dispatch'd thither.

And now what can we conclude from these Premisses, so plain, and so instructive; but that if we have any regard, either to the Truth of the Gospel, or to our own Security (and sure one would think we should have some regard to both) we ought, in the Words of my Text, to *Beware* of such *False Prophets*. This our Saviour directs; our Religion requires; and the natural Principle of Self-Preservation recommends it to us. To return either their Malice, or Violence, upon them; is, I hope, as far from our Desires, as, I am sure, it is contrary to our Doctrine. But to secure our selves against their Attempts; to watch, and stand upon our guard, and not suffer such furious Zealots to break in upon us, and devour us; is as prudent as it is innocent: Both our Duty, and our Interest, oblige us so to do.

Now to *beware of False Prophets*, may, in general, denote these two Things. Either,

First, To have a care of their *Doctrine*, that we be not seduced or ensnared by that. Or,

Secondly, To guard our selves against their *Attempts*; that we be not overtaken, and destroyed by those.

The *former* of these will, I think, admit but of little difficulty. For however some among us have of late endeavoured to represent *Popery* in a fairer Dress than either its Errors will allow, or their own Profession should have taught them to do: Yet, when all is done, so contrary is the whole System of that Religion, not only to some particular Principles, but to the very Nature and Design of Christianity; that 'tis impossible for any one who has attained to any competent Knowledge of the One, ever to be deceived, or perverted by the other.

Was it one great End of the Gospel to destroy *Idolatry*, and to bring us both to the *Knowledge*, and *Worship*, of the *only true God*, and *his Son Jesus Christ our Lord*? How then can the *Papist* justify either his *Faith*, or his *Worship*, in restoring again the Pagan Superstition under a Christian Dress? By the use, and adoration, of the *Cross* and other *Images*? By the veneration which he pays to *Saints* and *Angels*? By introducing other *Mediators* besides Christ? And going

to

to God by them, no less, that I do not say more frequently, than by him?

Does the Gospel set out to us but *one Sacrifice of Christ, once offered for Sin*? Does it teach us that by that *one Sacrifice* ^d *he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified*? That ^e *without shedding of Blood there can be no remission*: And that ^f *Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, Death hath no more Dominion over him*? Let the Papist tell us how this can possibly be reconciled with his daily *Sacrifice of the Mass*? Which he affirms to be a ^g *true and proper propitiatory Sacrifice*; and as such continually offers it up to God for the Sins and Satisfaction both of the Dead, and of the Living.

Was it the great Design of the Gospel to engage Men to ^h *live pure and holy Lives here*, as the only means of being happy hereafter? Has it declared *Repentance for Sin* to be the necessary condition of God's forgiveness? And that Repentance consists in an *actual Conversion* from a State of *Sin*, to a State of *Piety and Obedience*? But what can be more contrary to all this, than the Romish Doctrines of *Confession*, and *Absolution*? Of the pretended Efficacy of *Masses, Pardons, and Indulgences*? Of a *Purgatory after Death*, wherein to expiate such Sins as were not sufficiently cleans'd before? And of a

^d Heb. x. 14.

^e Heb. ix. 22.

^f Rom. vi. 9.

^g Concil. Trident. Sess. xxii. can. 1, 3.

^h Tit. ii. 11, &c.

thousand Artifices which they have found out to deliver a Sinner out of *Purgatory*, by such Methods as have as little Reason, as they have Religion in them.

Has the Gospel declared our blessed Lord to be the ⁱ *Head of his Body the Church*? How then does the *Pope* lay claim to that Character, and to the Authority derived from it? Has it prescribed the Use of ^k two outward Rites only, which we call *Sacraments*, and promised an inward, spiritual Grace, to the religious Use of them? Why then does the Papist enjoin the Use, and require the like Belief, of *Five* more? Did our Saviour in the Celebration of one of these expressly command us ^l *to drink of the Cup of Blessing*, as well as to *eat of the hallowed, and Mystical Bread*? With what confidence does the ^m Romanist forbid the Christian Communicant not only to *drink* of it, but even to *believe* that he lies under any *Obligation* so to do?

And what shall I say more? For the Time would fail me to speak * of that great Foundation of innumerable other Corruptions, their Doctrine of *Traditions*: * Of the *Publick Service of the Church in an unknown Tongue*: * Of the *Merits of good Works*: * Of the *Satisfactions* of their *Saints*: * Of the extensive *Power* of their *Pope*, and *Church*: * Of their scandalous, yet allow'd

ⁱ Eph. i. 22, 23.

Compare 1 Cor. xi. 23.

^k Mat. xxviii. 29. Mat. xxvi. 26, &c.

^l Mat. xxvi. 27.

^m Concil. Trident Sess. xxii. cap. 1, 2.

Principles, with respect to those whom they account *Schismaticks*, and *Hereticks*; towards *Kings*, and *Princes*; nay towards whole *Principalities* and *Countries*; often devoted by their *Bulls* to destruction, and sometimes assaulted, invaded, and murdered, in pursuance of their Sentences against them.

If these be Evangelical Doctrines, and Practices, let the *Church of Rome* be what she so much desires to be esteemed, the *Catholick*, nay the *only Catholick Church*. And let us rather be no *Christians*, than such *Catholicks*. But if such *Doctrines* as these can no more be reconciled with the *Truth of the Gospel*, than such *Practices* can be justified by the *Precepts* of it; I may then venture to conclude, that no one who knows any thing as he ought of his holy Profession, can ever be in danger of being seduced by such notorious Corruptions; or will need to be caution'd, in this respect, to *beware of these False Prophets*.

But much greater is the danger, *Secondly*, in the other Sense of the Word, and of a more present concern to us; I mean to *guard our selves against their Attempts*. It will require all our care; and try not only our highest Prudence, but our utmost vigilance too, in this Sense, to *beware of them*: The want of which has sometimes been fatal to the greatest Princes; who have suffered the Viper quietly to insinuate himself into their Bosoms, and would not be convinc'd of

their Danger, till they felt his Sting in their Hearts. This was eminently the Case of *Henry III.* and *Henry IV. of France*; and may abundantly convince us, how little reason we have to trust to their Pretensions, when such mighty Princes, and of their own Communion too, have been sacrificed by them, only for shewing some more favour to those of the *Reformed Religion*, than they thought it became them to do.

It is therefore beyond all doubt, that whether we consider their *Principles*, or their *Practices*, we have just reason to *Beware* of these *False Prophets*: The only Question is, *How far we ought to extend our Caution? And what kind of Security it will behove us to require of them?*

May we treat with them as with *other Men*, with *Citizens*, with *Christians*? And take their *Honour*, their *Promises*, or (which are wont to be sacred even with *Turks* and *Infidels*) their very *Oaths* for our Security?

Or must we deal with them, in what concerns the business of Religion, as with *Men of no Faith*; and *Enemies to Humane Society*: And never account our selves to be sufficiently guarded against their Attempts, but while we are armed with Power either to prevent, or to punish, their Perfidiousness.

I am not unsensible how ungrateful a Subject I am about to enter upon: What Offence it will be sure to give to those whose Designs I would hereby awaken you (if possible) to *Beware* of: And how little satisfaction it may, (perhaps) afford
to

to some others, who either do not so well know these Men, and their Religion, as they ought; or are not so apprehensive of the danger we are in from both, as it were to be wished they would be. But 'tis a service I owe to my Religion, and to my Country: And I will so manage the Debate, as to offer nothing to you but what their *own Books* declare to be their *Principles*; and I shall be able from the Authority of the best *Historians* to prove, has been their *Practice*.

To come then freely to the Point; I do conceive that to secure us in the *profession* of our *Reformed Religion*, and in the enjoyment of those *Rights*, that *Power*, and *Authority*, by which it is now happily established among us, we ought not to treat with *those* of the *Church of Rome*, as with *other Men*; with *Fellow Citizens*, or *Fellow Christians*. That their *Truth*, their *Promises*, nay their very *Oaths*, in this Case, are not to be rely'd upon by us. Their *Principles* caution us not to trust them; and their *Actions* shew that there is no dependance to be made upon them.

For, 1st, To begin with that, which though it may seem to be the lowest tie, is yet such a Principle upon which the general ground of Confidence between Man and Man is establish'd; that where Peace, and Society, are entertain'd; but much more, where Love, and Kindness, are profess'd; where there is neither any open Enmity declared, nor so much as any suspicion given of any secret grudge or rancour in the Heart; but, on the contrary,

trary, all is easy and quiet, kind and friendly towards each other, every one is to presume that he is secure: That the Persons with whom he corresponds mean him no harm, nor (till some just occasion be given for it) will do him any prejudice, whether in his Goods, Reputation, or (which is of the greatest consequence to every Man in this World) in his Body, and Life. How weak a Defence is this against the many standing *Sentences*, as well as open *Declarations*, of the *Romish Church* against those whom they account *Hereticks*? Who, as such, are solemnly onceⁿ at least every Year *excommunicated by them*? Whom all ° *Princes* and *Magistrates* of their *Communion*, are obliged to *punish, and extirpate out of their Dominions*? With whom they have determined that *no Faith is to be kept*? And against whom, tho' the execution of these Penalties is understood to be suspended where they want^p power, or opportunity, to put them in Practice; yet as soon as the Impediment is removed, their Obligation returns; and they are required to break through all ties of Love, Relation, and even common humanity it self; as they will escape the censure of being thought^q *favourers of Hereticks*: A Crime the next in danger,

ⁿ *Thursday* in Passion-Week. Cap. Excommunicamus. xiii. de Hæreticis.

° Cap. Excommunic. § moneantur de Hæreticis. Vid. pl. Tit. vii. de Hæreticis.

^p See Facultat. Concess. Ann. 1580. Execution for Treason, p. 19. With *Harr's* Confession, ibid. p. 21.

^q Cap. Excommunicamus. § Credentes. De Hæreticis.

and but little inferiour in guilt, to that of being themselves *Hereticks*.

Let me for Proof of this appeal to the horrid Treachery of the *Bartholomew Massacre* in a Neighbouring Kingdom; ^r contrived at a meeting of Pleasure and Gallantry, and executed at a time not only of publick Peace and Concord, but of the nearest Alliance, and under a solemn Treaty of Faith and Security. ^s Never did the *Court of*

^r *D'Aubigne*. Hist. Univ. Ann. 1565. Col. 292.

^s It is evident from the *French* Historians, that both the Peace with the Protestants, and Marriage of the King of *Navarre*, were purposely concerted for the Destruction of the Reformed. *Thuanus* indeed speaks of this with some Reserve, lib. xlv. p. 545. yet he reports so many previous Intimations and Discoveries of their Designs, lib. lii. as plainly shew, that the true end both of the Peace and Marriage, was only to get the Protestants into their Power, that so they might at once rid themselves of them. But other Historians are more open. Father *Bussièrs* speaks plainly, lib. xx. that the last Peace was made with the Reformed on purpose to catch them the more easily by Treachery, and destroy them. He tells us that a *Secret Council* was chosen to concert the Measures of it. And that the King, tho' so young, was admirably instructed by his Mother to dissemble with them. To this *Varillas* agrees: *Vic' de Charles ix.* lib. viii. p. 368, &c. lib. 9. p. 412, 437. Nor does *Mezeray* think it improbable. *Ad An. 1570.* And the *Memoirs, de l'Estat, de France sous Charles ix.* Vol. i. give such Proofs of it, as put it beyond all doubt. Two Days after the Massacre the King went to a Mass of Thanksgiving, and then in open Court own'd the ordering of it, and was complemented by the President and others upon it. Medals were struck in Memory of it: And upon *August* the 28th an extraordinary Jubilee was kept in *Paris* with Processions for the same. *Memoirs*, p. 422, 426, 510, 511, *Mezeray* ad Ann. 1572. At *Rome* the Pope went in Procession to *St. Lewis Church*, to give Thanks to God for it. In *Spain*, the Representation of it was solemnized before the King under the Title of *The Triumph of the Church Militant*, *Mezeray* ibid. From all which it appears, that this abominable Treachery and Massacre, was generally approved by those of the *Roman* Communion.

France carry it fairer, to all appearance, towards the *Reformed*, than at this Season. The great Admiral *Coligny*, as he was commonly call'd by the *King* his *Father*; so did he seem to be no less respected by him. The *King* of *Navarre* was now by Marriage, as well as Descent, become one of the nearest Princes of the Blood. All was disposed to Love and Joy, Kindness and Affection, towards each other. Nothing thought of but the Festival Celebrations of a Marriage, which was to put a final end to any farther Contests about Religion. When behold in the height of all this Trust and Security, the brave *Coligny* was first wounded in the Street, and before he had time to recover his hurt, basely oppress'd and murder'd in his Chamber: The Protestants, naked and unprepar'd, were every where pursued by armed Men; and in defiance of all Humanity, as well as contrary to all the Laws of Civil Society, were assaulted, pursued, butcher'd wherever they could be found. The very *King* of *Navarre*, with the Prince of *Conde*, tho' so nearly allied to the Royal Family, hardly escaped; * being forc'd to sacrifice their Consciences to save their Lives. Such was their Catholick Justice, and Mercy! And so little can we rely upon their pretences of Peace, or Fidelity, when the sacred Interest of the Church

* See *Buffieres* Hist. Gall. lib. xx. p. 119, 120. *Mezeray* ad An. 1572. *Varillas* Vie de Charles ix. lib. ix. p. 474. *Popliniers*, lib. xx. p. 67. *D'Aubigne*, Tom. ii. lib. i. col. 6.

requires them to treat us as Infidels, and Here-ticks!

But why do I trouble you with Instances from abroad, when our own Country, and the return of this Day, furnishes me with so memorable an Example at Home. When King *James I.* came to the Crown, the Papists were so far from being persecuted for their Religion, that his Majesty openly declared to his "Parliament his opinion against it. So high were they raised in their Expectations from him, as publickly to * petition for a *Toleration* : And one main Argument from whence they pretended to deserve it was; that they were by their Principles good *Englishmen*, and faithful Subjects; and therefore fit to be encouraged, as well as protected, by the Government.

I am unwilling to believe, y^o tho' there is but too much ground to suspect it, that at the very same time they thus boasted of their Duty to the King, and Affection to their Country, they were contriving the utter ruin of both. This is certain, that it was about that very time this horrid * Conspiracy was form'd, which should at once have sacrificed both the King, and his *Parliament*, to their unchristian Fury; and had it taken effect,

^u See the King's Speech to his first Parliament.

^x See their Petition, Ann. 1604. p. 7, &c.

^y See *Foulis Hist. of Popish Treasons*, Preface, p. 3. Epist. Casaub. 624. ad Front. Duc. p. 752, 753. Edit. 4to.

^z So *Winter's Confession*; which carries it back to *Lent*, An. 1603. *Catesby* and *Wright* having before been consulting about it.

would

would have put the whole Nation into a most dangerous Convulsion. With such little Truth, or rather with such a treacherous appearance of Duty, and Honesty, which they never meant, did they profess their Loyalty to their Prince, their Love and Tenderneſs to their Country, and their Fellow-Subjects!

Let me obſerve yet one thing more: In that *Parliament* many there were of their *own Religion*, who, had the blow been given, muſt have been overwhelmed in the ſame ruin with their Enemies. This ſome of a more ſcrupulous Temper, not yet quite diveſted of all humanity, ſtumbled at. But the harden'd^a *Jefuit* ſoon determined the matter; and reſolved, that for the good of the Church, better it were that ſome of their Friends ſhould periſh, than that their Enemies ſhould eſcape the deſtruction they had prepared for them.

To this unproſperous attempt under the *Father*, let me add another Inſtance, no leſs bloody, but more fatally ſucceſsful, under the *Son*: I mean the *Irish Maſſacre*; one of the moſt inhumane Butcheries that ever any People were guilty of; and which had the leaſt Provocation to atone for the barbarity of it. ^b The Papiſts enjoy'd both their Religion, and Liberties, in great Tranquillity. Their Priests executed their Functions as quietly, and almoſt as publickly, as thoſe of the eſtabliſh'd Church. They were united with the

^a Father Garnet.
land, Vol. II. p. 72, &c.

^b See Sir Richard Cox's *History of Ire-*

Protestants in the nearest Bands of Neighbourhood, Friendship, and Relation: They were admitted freely into the Magistracy, without any *Oath of Supremacy* to restrain them: And to all appearance were as easy, and contented, as it became them, and they had all the reason in the World to be.

And yet in these Circumstances, and without the least Provocation either from the People, or Government, a *general Massacre* was contrived by them: and so well did they succeed in it, that if we may take their own Account, they, in three Months time, murdered no less than 154000 Protestants, against all the *Laws of Nature, and Civil Society*; I should have added *Religion* too, but that I will not so far prophane the Name of *Religion* as to suppose they had any regard to that in what they did.

I might multiply many more Instances of the like kind to confirm what I am now to prove; but I am straightned in time, and must not enlarge. These may suffice to shew, *How little we of the reformed Religion can, with any safety, depend upon the common Faith, or Friendship, of those of the other Communion; when it shall be for the Interest of their Church to ruin, and destroy us.*

But, 2^{dly}, What the *Laws* of mere *Humanity*, therefore, cannot oblige them to, the *Duties of Religion* may: And even a *Papist* may be tied by his *solemn Promise, or Oath*, tho' not by the ordinary Bonds of *Society, or Friendship*. In
other

other matters perhaps he may be ; in the concern of Religion I doubt he cannot : And that, among others, upon these following Accounts.

First, That we can never be sure of what he does *promise*, or *swear*, in such a Case : We may understand his Words, and yet not reach his Meaning ; but when we imagine we have him the most secure, he may smile to think how credulous we are, and how finely he has deceived us with a few fair Words which signify just nothing, nor will lay any restraint at all upon him. Such is the Power of a well managed *Equivocation* ! * A Doctrine allowed, and practised, by some of the greatest Members of that Church, but especially those of our own Country : And how shall we be sure that they whom we treat with, do not deal with us upon the Measures of it ?

Now an *Equivocation* may be of two kinds ; either in *Words*, or in *Propositions*. Let us briefly take a View of both, that so we may the better see what Masters they are in this new Art of Fraud, and Deceit.

To *equivocate* in *Words*, is to understand the Terms in which they swear, or promise any thing, in some artificial and unsuspected Sense, which they keep close to themselves, and is utterly different from that in which those to whom they

* Vid. Epist. Casaub. 124 ad Front. Duc. p. 763, 764, 765. And Soto allows it to be lawful to equivocate in Words, if the Person be forcibly obliged to swear, when of right he ought not to be compell'd to it. De Just. & Jur. l. viii. q. 1. art. 7. Others extend it to Propositions also, as Sylvester quoted by Soto, l. c. &c.

Swear, or Promise, do understand them. Thus one of that Religion being ask'd by the Lord Mayor, ^d *Who was the Supreme Head of the Church of England?* Readily answer'd, *the King*: And being challenged by some of his own Party for it, as having therein virtually denied the *Pope's Supremacy*; told them, he meant the *King of Heaven*, not the *King of England*. Another denied he was a *Priest*; meaning a *Priest of Apollo*: And being farther question'd, ^e *Whether he had ever been beyond Sea?* Sware he had not; understanding by the *Sea* the *Indian Ocean*, not the *British Chanel*. And by the same Rule a Popish Prince may Swear, a thousand times over, to *defend and maintain the Church of England as by Law establish'd*, supposing (as ^f some of them have told us) "that Queen *Elizabeth* being illegitimate, and no rightful Queen; all her Acts upon which the Reformed Religion is established are of no Force;" and so Queen *Mary's* Statutes, with all the Popery of them, are, of right, the *Church of England by Law establish'd*.

But against this Sort of *Equivocation* a cautious Person may possibly guard himself: The other, which consists in *Propositions*, is more dangerous, and I doubt past any care, or skill, to foreclose. They tell us that the truth or falshood of what they Promise, or Affirm, is to be taken from the *whole* of what *they intend* by it. Now

^d Abbot Antilog. pag. 13, 14.

^e Ib. p. 12.

^f See Father Parson's Memorial, part 1. chap. 10.

of this, one Part they *express*, and that you know: But the other they *keep secret within their own Minds*, and what that is you may guess if you can. But so long as *both together are true*, 'tis no matter tho' *what is utter'd be false*, and those to whom they speak be deceived by it. ^aIn the time of the Plague, one of this Party went from *London to Coventry*: He was there examined *whether he came from London?* He affirmed *he did not*; adding at the same time in his Mind, that he *came not infected with the Plague from London*. In the time of King *James I*, the Jesuits were very desirous that the *Pope* should set an *Arch-Priest* over the *Seculars* here in *England*. The Affair was negotiated by Father *Standish*; who being examined by his Holiness, ^b*whether he transacted this Matter with the consent of the Seculars?* Answered roundly that *he did*; meaning within himself that *he did not know but that they might consent to it*. By the same help, a Prince may swear that *he will not endeavour to alter the Protestant Religion as by Law establish'd*; meaning *not by force of Arms*: And yet he may pack a *Parliament* to subvert it, as Queen *Mary* did; and as another Prince, within our own Memories, would have done. Or should you exclude that too, yet still he may have other secret Reservations to deceive, which neither can all of them

^a Crackanthorp contra Spalatens. p. 622. Casaub. Epist. ad Front. p. 765, &c.

^b Abbot. Antilog. p. 13.

be foreseen, nor is their any possible defence to be had against them.

But because this Doctrineⁱ tho' approved by too many, is yet disallow'd by others of the *Church of Rome*; let us suppose that what is promised, or sworn to, in this Case, be without any *Equivocation*, or *mental Reservation*, to deceive us: Yet still,

Secondly, We cannot rely upon it, in what concerns the Interests of their Religion; because that in such Cases they may *promise*, or *swear* to us, and yet *not be obliged* by what is *promised*, or *sworn*.

Many are the Circumstances in which it has been determined by them that *an Oath*, tho' never so solemnly made, *does not oblige*: I shall but barely mention some of them. ^k * *If a Man swear to another with his Mouth*, but at the same time *does not intend in his Mind* to swear: ^l * *If he swear inconsiderately*: ^m * *If what he swears to, be a mortal, or but even a Venial Sin*: ⁿ * *If he swears in such a Matter wherein he lay under an antecedent Obligation, which he*

ⁱ See Casaub. Epist. ad Front. Duc. p. 771. Escobar Summ. Theol. mor. Tr. 1. Exam. 3. cap. 4, and cap. 7. pag. 73.

^k Greg. Sayr. Theol. Caf. Consc. l. v. c. 9. n. 2. Qui Jurare non intendit non Obligatur. Escobar. Summ. Theol. Mor. Tr. 1. Exam. 3. p. 67. cap. 2. Conf. Cajet. in S. Tho. 22^d q. 89. art. 7.

^l Can. si. § Juramentum, 22. q. 4.

^m Cap. quanto. de Jurejurando. 22. q. 4. & Gloss. ib. Escobar. l. c. p. 68.

ⁿ Cap. ad nostram xxi. Eod. Tit. & Cap. sicut. ib. & Cap. Venientes, ib. Which all Popish Princes are under to extirpate Heretics. De Hæreticis c. 13. § moneantur.

had not of himself power to dispense with: °* If the thing to which he swears be such as he ought not to have sworn to without the Pope's leave: Or lastly, P* If the Person to whom he swears has no Right to his Faith; which is generally held to be the Case of *Infidels*, and *Hereticks*, but especially in what concerns the *Business of Religion*. For, as ^q one of their *Casuits* learnedly argues, "If Faith is not to be kept with *Tyrants, Pirates, and publick Robbers, who only kill the Body; how much less with obstinate Hereticks, who destroy the Soul. Justly therefore, says he, were those Hereticks Huss, and Prague, burnt by the Sentence of the Council of Constance, tho' a Promise of safety and security had been made to Them.*" So little reason have we to take their *Oaths* in this Case, who have freely told us be-

° *Cap. Venientes. Eod. Tit. & Cap. Ea. ib.*

P *Decret. Cap. xv. qu. 6. De Hæreticis, Tit. vii. c. 16. Et Comm. Gonzalis in illud Caput. Conf. Crackanthorp contr. Spalatens. c. 83, &c.*

q *Simancha. Institut. Catholic. Tit. 46. §. 52, 53, 54. Conf. Contr. Brun. de Hæret. l. 3. c. 15. De Hæret. c. 16. Gloss. Nota, quod ipso jure absolutus est quicumque aliquo genere obligationis tenetur astrictus Hæreticis.* And therefore the same *Gloss* adds that this Condition is to be understood in swearing to such Persons, "Si salis permanferit cui Communicare liceat." From all which general Rules, the *Gloss* upon the *Canon-Law*, draws these farther more particular Inferences: * That an *Oath made against the Canons* obliges not: * That to swear against the Law, is not an *Oath* but *Perjury*, *De Jurejurand. cap. 11.* * That those are not to be accounted *Oaths*, but rather *Perjuries*, which attempt any thing against the Interest of the Church. And therefore * Such *Oaths* are not to be kept, but repented of, *ib. c. 22.*

fore-hand that we shall be never the better for them!

It was upon this Principle that Pope^r *Urban VI.* annull'd the Treaties and Conventions which the *Emperor Charles IV.* and his Son, had made with certain of their neighbouring States, and Princes, that “ *All Covenants made with Hereticks, were rash, unlawful, and null in Law.* And Pope^r *Martin V.* upon the same Grounds, plainly declared to *Alexander* Prince of *Lithuania*, who had taken the *Bohemians* into his protection, “ *that he could not oblige himself to such Hereticks; but would be guilty of a mortal Sin should he keep his Faith with them.*

What these Popes defined, their *Casuits* generally agree to. “ *If those who break their Faith with Men* (says a late^r eminent Author of that Communion) “ *are to have no Faith kept with them, how much less those who break their Faith with the Church?*” This is their Doctrine: And I think the Inference on our side to be no less plain and conclusive, that *if no Faith be to be kept with us, then we have no reason to rely upon their Faith; or to have any regard to what they promise, or swear to us, in what concerns the Business of Religion.*

I will add but one Reason more, and it is this; that tho' we could be sure of what they swear; and that upon their own Principles, they should be obliged by it; yet still,

^r Vid. Bullam ipsam apud Crackanthorp. contr. Spalat. c. 83. p. 626.

^s Vid. Bzovium ad Ann. 1422.

^t Gonzales in lib. v. decret. de Hæret. c. 16. Tom. v. p. 202.

• *Thirdly*, We could not depend upon their *Oath* for our Security, because they *may swear*, and *be obliged*, and *yet that Obligation be dissolved*, tho' we do not consent to it, nay tho' we should never so solemnly protest against it. This is a Power which the *Pope* assumes to himself; and who dares say that he cannot of right do, what he tells us he can, and we are sure he has often in fact done?

It is a sad Story which their own *Authors* relate of the scandal which this once gave to the Enemies of our common Faith, and of the severe, but just Judgment of God, upon those who were concerned in it. * *Vladislaus* King of *Hungary* made a Peace with *Amurath II*, Emperor of the *Turks* for ten Years. The King swore upon the *Gospel*, the *Turk* upon his *Alcoran*, faithfully to observe the Treaty which they had made. This displeased the *Pope*, and his warlike Legate, Cardinal *Julian*, who had put himself at

* Layman Theol. moral. l. iv. tr. 3. c. ii. n. 5. De Hæret. c. 16. Gloss. See Father *Walsh* Hist. of the *Irish* Remonstrance, Address to the Catholics, p. 7, 8. To say nothing of the Bulls against King *Henry VIII* first, and afterwards against Queen *Elizabeth*. It was upon this Principle that the *Sorbon* declared the People of *France* to be free from the Oath which they had made to King *Henry III*, and address'd to the *Pope* to confirm it by his Authority; See *Fowles* Hist. of *Romish Treasons*, lib. viii. chap. 5. Decr. c. 15. q. 6. Aquin. 22æ. q. 89. art. 9. Resp. ad 3. Cajetan; ib. Soto de Justit. & Jur. l. viii. q. 1. art. 9. Where the general Rule is this, *In Odium Excommunicatorum Juramenta qua illis sunt relaxantur*.

* *Æneas Sylvius*, Epist. 81. Spond. Cont. Baron. Ad Ann. 1444. Bonfin. Dec. 3. l. 6.

the Head of a Croisade against the Infidels. The Pope empower'd his Legate, and the Legate *dissolved the Oath*, which the King and his Lords had taken, to keep their Truce; and freed them from all Obligation to it. Upon this they invade the Enemy, who was then absent with his Forces in *Asia*; and hoped, to have over-run his Country on this side, before he could possibly return to defend it. Enraged at their Perfidiousness, *Amurath* hastens back with all speed into *Europe*; engages the Christian Army, and was in danger of being utterly overthrown by it. In this distress, he pulls out of his Bosom the *Treaty of Peace* which the *Christians* had made with him, and sworn to observe: And looking up to the Crucifix which was carried before them, " *This, says he, O Christ, is the League which thy Christians made with me, swearing to it by thy Name. If thou be a God, avenge the Injury which they have done both to thee and me.*

He had hardly utter'd his Words, before the Battle began to turn against them. The King was slain: The *Cardinal*, who had been the chief Author of this Treachery, was wounded, and escaped out of the Field; and in that condition was stripped, and left half dead, to perish with cold and hunger, rather than by the hurts he had received. Scarce one third part of the Army escaped; so that as their own Historians observe, " *God seem'd by the Event plainly to shew, that Oaths are to be kept not only with those of*

*" the Household of Faith, but even with them
" who are Enemies to it.*

I shall close up this whole debate with that instructive Remark which one of their own Writers made upon the *Oath of Allegiance*; that great Subject of Dispute in the beginning of the last Age: * *How foolish, says he, were they (our King and Parliament) with all their Caution? They thought they had contrived an Oath with so many Circumstances, that it could not be broken with a safe Conscience by any Authority whatsoever. But they did not consider, that if the Pope dissolved its Obligation, all the Ties of it (and yet one of them was, not to admit of any Dispensation from the Pope, or any other Power whatsoever, for such a Purpose) signified nothing. I will add, continues he, what will be more surprizing: If an Oath be declared to be unjust; it binds not: But this Oath has been declared by the Pope to be unjust; and so all its Obligation vanishes into Smoak: And that Bond which so many wise Men thought to be as strong as Iron, is, in truth, weaker than Straw.*

And now, let those take such Securities as these, who do not know how little the Papist makes of them, or how many ways he has to free himself from being obliged by them. But let not us think such Ties as these to be a sufficient caution for the Religion, Laws, and Liberties of our Country: For our own Lives, and the preserva-

* Pacenius, cit, a Crack, contr. Spalat. c. 83. p. 623.

tion of our Posterity. We must have some more real Securities from them if ever we mean to be safe: And never think our selves free from danger, while they have it in their Power to do us a Mischief.

What has been the Spirit of *those of that Religion* under a Succession of *Protestant Princes*, you all know, and the return of this Day speaks it to us.

What a *Protestant People* may expect from a *Prince of that Communion*, God be thanked our own History cannot much instruct us. Yet even there we read what solemn Promises *Queen Mary* made, at her first coming to the Crown, to those of *King Edward's Religion*, to maintain the profession of it, while she needed their help to set her upon the Throne: And how well she kept those Promises after they had done it, the infamous Cruelties of her short Reign, for the Cause of Religion, sufficiently shew.

But what we cannot learn from our own History, we may from those of a Neighbouring Country. How many *Publick Edicts*, and *Treaties of Peace*, were there granted and confirmed to those of the Reformed Religion by three successive Kings, *Charles IX*, *Henry III*, and *Henry IV*, of *France*? With what Solemnity were they ratified, and required to be observed by those of the other Communion? And what was the Issue of all these Publick Laws, and Oaths? While the Reformed

^y Abbot Antilog. cap. vi. fol. 100. Bishop Burnet's Hist. Reformation, Vol. II. p. 237.

were in Power, and had Princes of the Blood, and others of the highest Quality, to stand by them; whilst they kept the cautionary Fortresses, and Commands, which had been given them for their Security; whilst *France* was exercised under a long Succession of Civil Wars, and the Protestants were necessary to defend the Court against the Popish Leaguers, and Rebels to it; they enjoy'd the Exercise of their Religion under the Protection of the Government. The Edicts published on their behalf were declared, in the proper sense of the Words, to be *perpetual, and irrevocable*. King *Lewis XIII*, tho' he twice sware to the observation of them, yet professed he thought there was no need for him so to do, because he should otherwise have been obliged to fulfil them. Twice did the * *present King* solemnly confirm the *Edict of Nantes*, and declare it to be of *perpetual Obligation*.

And yet no sooner had the Protestants lost their chief Supporters, and parted with their cautionary Towns, and Fortresses, but measures were forthwith taken for their utter Ruin. Every Year produced some new Order or other, to restrain their Liberty, and bring them nearer to destruction. Military Converters were let loose upon them; and the *Mass*, or *Persecution*, was their only choice. Till finally the very *Edict of Nantes* its self was repealed, and shewn to be no longer either *perpetual*, or *irrevocable*.

* *Lewis XIV.*

And how much they have suffered since from their hands, is too well known to need any enlargement upon it.

This has been *their* Case; God grant it may never be *our own*! And it evidently shews, what I am now asserting, to be the Truth; that *the only solid Security against Popish Tyranny, is to keep the Power in our own Hands; and not trust the Sword to those, who if ever they have an opportunity, will not fail to cut our Throats with it.*

And this may suffice to shew, both what good reason we have to *beware of these false Prophets*: And what is the only secure method that a Protestant People can take for the doing of it. I shall only draw a few remarks, by way of farther *application*, from what I have now delivered, and so conclude.

And, First, from what has been said, it appears how very dangerous the *Principles* of those of the *Church of Rome* are to such as differ from them; and what a watchful Eye it will, therefore, behove our own Government to have upon them. Persecution for Religions sake is what the Gospel of Christ, no where, that I know of, either encourages, or approves. The *Church of England*, I am sure, has ever been an Enemy to it: And if I know my own Heart, ten thousand times rather would I suffer persecution upon such an account my self, than be the Author, or Abettor of it, against others. But we may be cautious, without being cruel: We may be careful to defend our selves, without doing any injury
to

to others. To chain up furious Men, and not suffer them to do themselves, or others, a mischief, was never yet thought to be either unjust, or uncharitable. This is all we need, and all that the foregoing Discourse was designed to recommend to you.

It has, I know, been pretended, in answer to what I have now asserted with relation to this matter, that these are not the *Maxims* of *all those* of the *other Communion*: Nay, that several of them have declared their dissent to such Principles. Let it be allow'd that there are some better Christians, than Papists, in the *Church of Rome*: Yet still it cannot be denied but that these are, without controversy, the Tenets of the much greater part; and that is enough to convince us of the necessity of *bewareing of them*. And even those who disown them, should it come to the Tryal, would not dare to oppose what the others should do in pursuance of them.

When *Tir-Oen* raised a Rebellion in *Ireland*, among other questions sent to the foreign Universities to be determined with relation to that Enterprize, this was one; ^y “*Whether it were lawful for any of the Romish Religion to fight against him, or otherwise to assist the Queen of England in opposing of him?*” It was answer-

^z Foulis's Hist. of *Romish Treason*, lib. ix. c. 3. p. 491. And in defence of Stanley's Treason against Queen *Elizabeth*, this was laid down for a ground in his Justification, “*That in all Wars which may happen for Religion, every Catholick Man is bound in Conscience to employ his Person and Forces by the Popes direction.*” Important. Confid. pag. 72.

“ ed, that it was not lawful for them to fight
 “ against him, nor to favour the English in any
 “ way: That those who should do so, could nei-
 “ ther obtain eternal Salvation, nor be absolved
 “ from their Sins by any Priest, till they should
 “ first repent and forsake the English Army.

Let us suppose that upon any other the like occasion hereafter, some of that Religion should have such Scruples as would not suffer them to fight against their Prince, or their Countrymen, in such a Case; yet even these would be forced to sit still, and submit to what the rest should do: And not dare to oppose their more furious Brethren, in defiance not only of their common Good, but of an Excommunication too against themselves as *favourers of Hereticks, and Enemies to the Interest of their Church.*

Secondly, From the same Grounds we may see, what just reason our Governours hadⁿ to settle

* The Papists have no reason to complain of this: It was their own design, could they have got a Prince and Parliament of their Religion. See *Parsons's Memorial*, part iii. chap. 2. “ It must appertain also unto a Catholick Prince, whom God shall bless with the Crown of England, —first of all to assure the Succession of the Crown by good Provision of Laws; —And in such manner must he link the State of Catholick Religion and Succession together, as the one may depend, and be the assurance of the other. To this he tells us, *Cardinal Allen*, and other principal Persons of the Nation agreed,” *Apol. in Defence of Eccles. Subordination in England*, p. 187. Col. 2. And Pope Clement VIII, in his two Bulls sent to Father *Garnet*, exhorts the English Papists, “ Ne post obitum Regina Elizabethæ, ad Angliæ Sceptrum tenendum suscipere, nisi Eum, quantumcunque propinquitate Sanguinis niteretur, qui Fidem Catholicam non modo toleraret, sed omni Ope & studio promoveret; & more majorum Jurejurando se id præstiturum, susciperet.

the Succession of the Imperial Crown of this Realm in the Protestant Line; and how much it will import us to hazard, if need be, our very Lives themselves for the defence of that Succession. A Popish Prince what ever he may profess, can never protect a Protestant People. The very *Oath* he should take to do this, is already declared to be *void*, and of *no Force*: And should he observe it, he would not only be excommunicated for his attempt, but upon persisting in it would be deprived of his Authority; and 'tis great odds would forfeit his very Life too. This is the Law of *Rome*; and the greatest Princes have sometimes, to their cost, felt the effect of it. And to imagine that a Popish King, who knows all this, will nevertheless venture his Crown, his Life, nay and his very Soul also, to maintain a Religion which he hates; and which in his Conscience he believes to be *Heretical* and *Damnable*; is such an extravagant opinion, as will not deserve to be seriously confuted.

There are some indeed, who against this reasoning, plain as it is, alledge the Example of King *Henry IV. of France*: A Popish Prince, yet a constant and steady Defender of his Protestant Subjects. Now to allow that he was such a Protector of them as is supposed; yet who does not know, that he never was a real Papist in his Heart. ^b He refused to be instructed in that way, least he

^h See D'Aubigne Hist. Tom. iii. c. 24. Vie de Mornay, p. 198. 207.

should but seem to change his Religion upon Conviction; and declared to his old Friends, that in turning Papist he sacrificed himself for their sakes, whom by this means he should be able the better to support. And the *Jesuits* were so well satisfied of the Truth of this, that they resolved to make his Word good; and stabb'd him to the Heart for it.

And yet, after all; was this great Prince so zealous a Defender of the Protestants, as to make a Reformed Nation fond of such a King? ^c How many years pass'd before he did any thing at all for their Security; nay, before he freed them from the danger of the Laws, and League, which had been made against them? And with what difficulty was he brought to do it at the last? ^d His Kinsman, the *Prince of Conde*, the then next Heir to the Crown, he bred up in the *Popish* Way, contrary to the express Will of his Father. He would have perverted his own Sister, and did marry her to the *Duke of Barr*, a Prince of the other Religion. ^e He restored the Mass in *Bearn*, from whence his Mother, with the consent of the States, had banish'd it, thirty Years before. ^f He corrupted several Ministers, and other leading Men of the *Reformed Religion*, to enter into

^c See d'Aubigne Tom. iii. lib. iv. c. 11. col. 500, &c. lib. v. c. 1. col. 618. Ambassad. de Perron. p. 156. Vie' de Mornay. p. 201, &c. 206, 234. Monsieur le Vaser Hist. de Louis xiii. lib. ii. p. 159, 167.

^d D'Aubigne Tom. iii. l. v. c. 3, 4. Ambassad. de Perron. p. 156, 184. Vie' de Mornay, p. 253.

^e Ambassad. de Perron, p. 156, 184. Vie' de Mornay, p. 254.

^f D'Aubigne Tom. iii. l. v. c. 1.

Measures contrary to the Interests of it. ^g He would have broken the Union of the Churches by restraining the meeting of their *National Assemblies*; and the Liberty of their *Provincial Synods*, by sending a Deputy of his own to be present at their Sessions. In a Word, ^h he promised to get the *Council of Trent* published in *France*, which none of his Predecessors had yet done; nor could he himself obtain the doing of it?

Such a Friend to the Protestants was King *Henry IV*! And such reason have we to desire the like Defender! And yet, after all, he did what he could for them; and (to admonish other Princes to take other Measures) he lost his Life for his kindness to them. But

3dly, and Lastly, From what has been said it appears, what good Grounds we have to *keep up the solemn return of this Day*: A Day memorable for *Popish Treachery*; and for the double Deliverance of our Church, and Nation, from the Designs of it. For if, notwithstanding these publick Occasions of reviving in Mens Minds the dangers of *Popery*, we see many as secure as if there were no fears of it; others almost willing to believe themselves, and to persuade others, that there is no great harm in it: How much more insensible, have we reason to fear, they would all be, were there no such *publick Seasons* appointed to put you in remembrance of these things, and

^g Vie' de Mornay, p. 304.

^h Ambassad' de Perron. p. 156, 184.

to convince you of the folly and error of such Imaginations.

Be not deceived: *Poper*y is an Enemy; a cruel, furious, and irreconcilable Enemy, to the *Reformed Religion*: An Enemy not to be satisfied with any thing short of the utter Destruction of what they call the *Northern Heresy*. Look into all the Nations round about, and search, and see; where did it ever prevail, and the Protestant Interest not suffer by it? And let us not think that we shall escape at all better than our Brethren abroad have done. Truth and Piety may be mild and gentle, patient and charitable: But Error, and Superstition, will be savage and cruel. By Scripture and Reason it cannot prevail; and therefore it must take such other Methods as alone are able to support its Authority. Thus *Paganism* first, then *Mahometism* did: Thus *Poper*y does; and thus all other the like false Religions will ever do.

Let us then resolve to take the caution of the Text, and *Beware of these False Prophets*. Our Liberties, our Lives, our Own, and our Posterity's welfare, all invite us to this Care. And that God may Crown our Endeavours with Success in it, and continue to protect us, as he has hitherto mercifully done, from their Devices; let us thankfully commemorate, and worthily adore, his Goodness for the many wonderful Preservations which he has already been pleased to vouchsafe us from their Attempts, and Conspiracies, against us.

H

That

That when our King, and our Princes; the Fathers of our Church, and the Great Council of the Realm; were all devoted by them, as on this Day, to Destruction; and the Blow was just ready to be given; he not only delivered them from it, but turned the Destruction upon their own Heads.

That when again, but a few Years since, the Interests of Popery were openly carried on, with a high Hand, against us; he raised us up a glorious Defender; inspired him with Courage to undertake our Protection, and carried him on with Success to accomplish what he had undertaken.

That to compleat our Deliverance, and to prevent any future Dangers from their unwearied Endeavours to destroy us, He endued that great Prince, and his Parliament, with Wisdom, and Resolution, to settle the Succession of the Imperial Crown of this Realm in the Protestant Line: So that unless we will betray ourselves, we cannot easily be overthrown by them.

That in consequence of this Establishment, no less than by her own undoubted Right, he has given us a most pious, wise, and just Queen of our own Religion, to succeed that illustrious King: To be the Inheritor of his Virtues, as well as of his Authority; and to compleat the Deliverance which he had wrought for us.

That he has blessed her with such a continued course of eminent Successes abroad, such an universal Honour and Esteem at home, as scarce any of her Predecessors have ever been able to attain unto.

Long

Long may she live to be the Defender of our Faith; the Protector of our Laws, and Liberties; the Terror of her Enemies; the Support of her Allies; the Delight of Mankind.

May she Reign, *as she does*, in the Hearts of her Friends; and tread under her Feet, *as she has begun to do*, the Necks of her Adversaries! May Success evermore attend all her Undertakings, for her own Honour, and for the publick Good! And whensoever it shall please God to remove her from us, may there never be wanting a Succession of the like pious, and renowned Princes, of the Protestant Line, to govern and defend this Protestant Church, and Realm, till Time and Ages shall be no more!

*Which God of his infinite Mercy Grant,
thro' Jesus Christ our Lord: To whom
with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all
Honour and Glory, Dominion and Praise,
for ever and ever. Amen.*



S E R M O N I V.

Preach'd in the

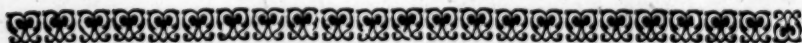
PARISH CHURCH

O F

St. James's Westminster,

On Sunday, September 29, 1706.

At his taking Leave of the PARISH.



2 COR. xiii. II.

*Finally, Brethren, Farewel: Be perfect;
be of good Comfort; be of one Mind;
live in Peace; and the God of Love and
Peace shall be with you.*



These Words are the Conclusion of this
second Epistle of St. Paul to the
Corinthians; and do, in effect, con-
tain the sum of all that he had before
been exhorting them unto in it. His
Rules are short, but comprehensive; and by ob-
serving whereof, they would not only prevent
those

those Miscarriages they had before been guilty of, but would render themselves a happy People; beloved of God, and highly esteem'd by all wise and good Men.

But tho' I look upon these Directions to have been deliver'd by St. *Paul*, with a particular relation to the Circumstances of the *Corinthians*, from which ours at this time are, in many respects, very different; yet will they nevertheless be, in the main, of good use to us: Nor do I know how I could more properly take my Leave of you, than in the same Words, and with the like Spirit of Love, and Affection, that *That Apostle* did of them;

Finally, Brethren, Farewel: Be perfect; be of good Comfort; be of one Mind; live in Peace; and the God of Love and Peace shall be with you.

Three Things there are which the *Text* naturally presents to our consideration; and which I shall accordingly make the Subject of my Discourse upon it.

I. St. *Paul's* concluding *Salutation* of the *Corinthians*; *Finally, Brethren, Farewel.*

II. The short, but comprehensive, *Exhortation* with which he took his leave of them; *Be perfect; be of good Comfort; be of one Mind; live in Peace.* And,

III. His affectionate *Wish* for, and *Promise* to them, upon their complying with this *Exhortation*;

tion; *And the God of Love, and Peace, shall be with you.*

I will consider every one of these; first, as they were primarily address'd by *St. Paul* to the *Church of Corinth*; and then, as they may no less properly be apply'd by *me* to *you*.

I begin with the First of these;

I. The concluding *Salutation* of *St. Paul* to the *Corinthians*; *Finally, Brethren, Farewel.*

Among the many *Churches* taught, or rather founded, by *St. Paul*, this of *Corinth* was one of the most eminent. He spent no less than a Year and half in that City upon this Work*: And when he heard of the *Disorders* which they fell into soon after his departure from them, he wrote that admirable *Epistle* which is still read in the Church, both to correct those Disorders, and to settle them in that right Faith which he had deliver'd to them.

This *First Epistle* had a very happy Effect upon them: It brought them, in good measure, both to a just Sense of their former Miscarriages, and to an entire conformity to the Gospel of Christ. But still there remained some vain-glorious Men, who opposed the Endeavours of *St. Paul* in this behalf; and did, what in them lay, to render his Ministry utterly ineffectual to reclaim them. Upon this he wrote this *Second Epistle* to them;

* Acts xviii. 11.

to vindicate his Authority; to silence those False-Teachers; to justify his Conduct towards them; to exhort them to a better Behaviour of themselves; and to let them freely know, that if they did not hearken to what he wrote, he would come to them, and proceed by proper Censures against the obstinate and incorrigible among them. And having done this, he concludes all in the Words before us; *Finally*, (or, as the Original imports) *For what remains, Farewel*. He had said all that he could, and even more than was needful, both to direct, and to exhort, them *to walk as became the Disciples of Christ*, and had nothing now remaining but to take his Leave of them; *Finally, Brethren, Farewell: Rejoice ye*; for that is the proper signification of the Word; and includes in it not only a friendly *Salutation*, but an affectionate *Wish* too; a *Wish* of all the Happiness which an *Apostle* could desire for his *Church*; or, in *St. Paul's* own more tender Allusion, *1 Cor. iv. 15. a Father for his Children*.

I am not so vain as to pretend in any wise to compare my Ministry among *you*, with that of *St. Paul* to the *Corinthians*. His Mission, his Illumination, his Power, his Zeal, his Labours, his Sufferings, all set him beyond any such Comparisons. Two things only there are which upon this occasion I may be allow'd, without Presumption, to say; That ^b *I have not been wanting*, to the best of my Power, *to declare unto you the*

^b Acts xx. 26.

whole Counsel of God. I have omitted no part of the Gospel of Christ, that was either needful for you to know, or proper for me to speak of. And that being now come to an end of my Ministry among you, I do with all the Sincerity, for I presume not to say Perfection, of St. *Paul's* Charity, in the *Words* of my *Text*, and in the utmost force and import of them, heartily bid you *Farewel*; and earnestly beseech God so to bless you with all Spiritual Graces, that you may ^c *Rejoice in the Lord always*: And being ^d *filled with all Joy and Peace in believing*, may *abound in Hope thro' the Power of the Holy Ghost*.

In order whereunto I cannot tell what better *Directions* it could be possible for me to leave with you, than those which St. *Paul* here recommended to the *Corinthians*, as his last and best Advice; namely,

II. *To be Perfect*; to be of good Comfort; to be of one Mind; to live in Peace; the next Thing to be considered.

I have already intimated that there were many *Disorders* in the Church of *Corinth*, when St. *Paul* wrote these *Epistles* to them: And I must now add that these *Disorders* were chiefly occasioned by their want of that full *Knowledge of*, and *Proficiency in*, the *Faith* and *Piety* of

^c Phil. iv. 4.

^d Rom. xv. 13.

the *Gospel*, which they ought to have attained unto.

If we consider their *Knowledge* of the *Gospel*, that one instance of the *Resurrection of the Dead*, may alone suffice to shew how short, how defective it was, even in the most fundamental *Articles* of our Faith. That after all the Apostle had done to instruct them in it, yet *some among them* should still continue to doubt of it; and as himself expresses it, 1 Cor. xv. 12. to say in plain Terms, *that there is no Resurrection of the Dead*.

So strange was their *Ignorance* in the *Faith* of *Christ*; nor was their *Practice* at all better than their *Knowledge*. Let me for this appeal to their imprudent, as well as unjustifiable, Conduct of themselves in the *Use of their Spiritual Gifts*, 1 Cor. ch. xii, xiv. In their feasting with their *Gentile Acquaintance*, and in the very *Temples* of their *Idols*, and upon their *Idolatrous Festivals*, ch. viii, x. But above all to their inexcusable behaviour with relation to the *Lord's-Supper*, 1 Cor. xi. 17, &c. which they neither so duly prepared themselves for, nor so reverently behaved themselves at, as they ought to have done.

In both these respects therefore, as they greatly needed to become *wiser* and *better*, so we cannot doubt but that the *Apostle* earnestly desired their Improvement in both: And that we must from hence derive the design and import of this *first part* of his *Exhortation*; that they should be *perfect*;

fect; that is, should endeavour to attain to a more full, and *perfect Knowledge*, of the *Truths* of the *Gospel*; and to rise up to a higher degree of *Perfection* in the *Practice* of the *Duties* of it.

But there was yet another Fault in that Church, which, as St. *Paul* chiefly design'd by these *Epistles* to correct, so I do conceive that this Expression does, in a particular manner, refer to it. They were not only so defective, as I have observed, in many other Instances of their Duty; but were more especially wanting in that excellent Grace which should have *perfected* all their other Performances, I mean, in their *Love* and *Charity* towards one another.

It is not at all needful to my present purpose to enquire how they came to be so unhappily divided into Parties and Factions, as we are told, and as it appears by these very *Epistles*, that they were. 'Tis enough that we are assured that they both lived in Strife and Contention with one another about their *own private Concerns*; and were openly divided in point of *Church Communion*^d: Set up Pastors against Pastors; Gifts against Gifts; *Paul* against *Apollos*, and both against *Cephas*; and by means thereof at once both hinder'd their own Spiritual Proficiency, and destroy'd the Peace of the Church of Christ.

To put an end to these Disorders, the *Apostle* here exhorts them to *be perfect*; that is, to be

• 1 Cor. iv.

^d 1 Cor. iii.

firmly knit together, either as the *Members* in the *natural Body*, or as the *several Parts* are in a *Building*; for to both these the *Word* does allude; and so his meaning will be the same with what he had more fully before express'd, almost in the same Phrase, 1 Cor. i. 10. *Now I beseech you, Brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing; and that there be no Divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment.* And therefore tho' I would not exclude that more general Account I before gave of this *first Rule*; yet I cannot but look upon this as the most proper and express Design of it; namely, That they should *be perfect in Charity, in Unity, in Communion.* That laying aside all partiality for one *Teacher* above another, they should all join together in the same *Society*, and in the same *Worship*. Should restore those who had unhappily broken themselves off from them: Should strengthen those who still held *Communion* with them: In a Word; should all become *one Spiritual Body; one Building; one Temple of God*; endeavouring above all things to *keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.*

Tho' I hope, and am persuaded, that none less need this part of St. Paul's Exhortation than your selves; yet *Perfection* is a Work of too high a Nature for any of us to have gone on so far in it, as not to have somewhat still left us to aim at, and to endeavour, if possible, to attain unto: Nor can
an

an Advice of this Nature ever be unseasonable to any of us.

If we consider the point of *Christian Knowledge*, it must be confess'd that great is the Improvement which of late has been, and is daily making in it. The *Publick Instructions* of the Church are both prepared for, and perfected by, the more *private Informations* at Home. Schools have been set up and maintain'd by the Rich, for the better Education of the Poor: Whose Children by this means are brought up to know more of Religion than their Parents, for want of such Opportunities, do themselves understand. This is a great and useful Improvement; set on foot a few Years since; but blessed by God to a prodigious encrease. As you have therefore begun, so I cannot but exhort you *to abound in this Charity more and more*. And could I now at the last but be so happy as to obtain yet one thing farther of you, I mean to attend more duly upon the weekly *Catechising*^c: Could I prevail with *Parents* to send their *Children*; *Masters* their *Servants*; and both, as they have Opportunity, to come themselves, and give Countenance at least to this best and most useful sort of Instruction, if not to profit by it; I should then hope there would be little remaining to complete this first Design of the present *Rule*; and to make you *perfect* in the *Knowledge of what pertains to Religion*.

^c According to the Rubrick in the Book of Common-Prayer.

For the next thing in which St. *Paul* exhorted the *Corinthians* to *be perfect*, namely, in a *Practise* becoming the *Gospel of Christ*; it would not besit me in this place either to enquire into the Conduct of particular Persons, or to make any Remarks upon it. But for what concerns the main thing of all, in which they were the most defective, *viz.* The *publick Service of the Church*, and especially the *celebration of the Holy Sacrament of the Lord's Supper*; I must do you the Justice to declare, that I do not think there was ever any *Christian Church*, in any Age, that came nearer to *Perfection* than you do. Here therefore I must depart a little from the Exhortation of my Text, and instead of bidding you *be perfect*, must beseech you rather to continue on in the same Zeal and Piety that you already practise. To worship God, and to commemorate the Death and Passion of Christ with the same Decency and Reverence, Humility and Devotion, that you have been wont to do. And, as you have Opportunity, to persuade those who still neglect their Duty in these Particulars, to follow your good Example; and *be perfect* in this respect, as you, by God's Grace, are, in great measure, if not altogether, *perfect*.

As to the last, and most proper import of this Rule; to *be perfect* in a *constant Unity*, and *Communion with the Church of Christ established among us*, never was there a time in which this Nation, in general, seem'd more to need such an Exhortation than at this day. And yet, even here

here too, I cannot but think that you of *this Parish* stand as little in need of it as any. The Number of those who *separate* from our *Parochial Congregation*, God be thanked, is not great; and whatever it be, diminishes every day. Our agreement with one another, in all our publick Concerns, has been constant, and uninterrupted; and we have even in these Times of Charge and Difficulty shewn to the World the good Effects of it. We have cleared off the Burthen of a very great ^h Debt contracted for the building of one Church, and have since that erected another. We have set up ⁱ Schools of Charity: We have encreased the ^k Returns of our daily Prayers; not to mention several other Instances of what has been done within a few Years last past, I do not say without the least Division, or Contention; but rather with such an Unanimity, as how much soever it might have been wish'd for, yet could scarcely have been expected, amidst the many unfortunate Schisms, and Factions, that too much abound on every side of us.

However, if there be any thing still wanting to improve a perfect Peace, and Unity, among us, *Let us follow after the things that make for it;*

^h Of 3000 l. besides what was spent in finishing the Steeple.

ⁱ For 50 Boys: and 60 Girls; who are taught, cloathed, and bound Apprentices; besides the Charity School for 36 Boys which was founded before.

^k To four times every Day in the Church: and twice in the Chapel.

and

and endeavour yet more to edifie one another by it. Let us love as Brethren; forgiving and forbearing one another, if any Man has a Quarrel against any. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but considering what, upon a diligent Search, and the Conviction of many Years Observations, I think myself obliged in Conscience, upon this occasion, publickly to profess to you; that whether we respect its truly *primitive*, and *sound Doctrine*; its *Apostolical Government*; or its *pious*, and *devout Liturgy*; there is no Church at this Day in the World so worthy in all respects to be *united unto*; or with which a good Christian, were he to make his choice, would rather desire to *communicate*; than the *Church of England by Law Established*.

O! therefore let us resolve not only to hold fast to the *Unity of this Church* ourselves, but to endeavour, what in us lies, to convince all others of their Duty to join with us in the *Fellowship* of it: And not suffer any unjust Prejudices to hinder us from being *perfect* in this last, and most necessary Sense of that Expression; that is, *firmly united in one Holy Communion*, and *constantly joining in the same publick Worship*, with one another.

This if we do, we shall then not fail to be also (2^{dly}) *Of good Comfort*; the next thing to which St. Paul exhorted the *Corinthians* in the Words before us.

For

For the better understanding whereof I must observe, that the *Apostle*, in his *former Epistle*, had sharply reprov'd them for their Miscarriages: He had lively represented their Faults to them, and given them both his Directions, and his Commands, for the reforming of them. Now this, as we find by this¹ *Second Epistle*, had made a deep Impression upon the Minds of all the better, and more sober part, of that Church; and even upon some who had before *walk'd disorderly*, but were now brought to consider, and repent of, their Evil-Doings. They were greatly concern'd for what they had done amiss; and they readily obey'd the *Apostle's* Admonition for the Correction of it.

This therefore is that which I take him now again to refer to, as he had several times mention'd it in the foregoing parts of this *Epistle*. He intimates to them the satisfaction that he took in their love towards him; but especially in their ready obedience to his Commands; and their concern to give him satisfaction in all that he required of them: And he bids them to be of good Comfort; *i. e.* not to be any longer troubled at his Reproof of them; but to *Rejoice with him that he had Confidence of them in all things*, 2 Cor. vii. 16. And had *approved themselves to be clear in those matters* for which he had written to them, *Y. II.*

¹ See Ch. ii. vii. 7, &c.

But there is besides this another Sense in which this Expression very well may, and, I think, ought also to be understood: And that is, that they should *encourage*, and *exhort* one another, in the discharge of their Duty; but especially as to what concern'd the closing of those *Divisions* that had been unhappily raised among them. And if we thus put the two Significations of the *Word* together, the full meaning of this *second part* of *St. Paul's Advice* will be this; that they should not be *discouraged* at the consideration of those *Disorders* that had unhappily fallen out amongst them; but should *exhort* one another to endeavour all they could to correct what was amiss; and then *be of good Comfort*, and not doubt but that God would bless their Endeavours; and remove those Scandals, and make up those Divisions, which had caused so much Grief and Trouble to them.

Whether the *Holy Spirit* which directed our *Apostle* in what he now wrote, might not have had a yet farther regard in this Expression to the *Trials*, and *Dangers*, which the *Church of Christ* was, not long after, to fall under from the *Persecutions* of its *Enemies*, I cannot tell. But sure I am, that nothing in the World can better fortify any one against whatever *Trials* may come upon him, than such a *Perfection* of *Christian Faith*, and *Piety*; such a *Unity*, and *Charity*, as he had just before recommended to the ^m Co-

^m See 2 Cor. iv. 16.

rinthians. For indeed, how can *any thing* without hinder that Person from being of *good Comfort within*, who by a lively and strong Faith, and a holy Conversation, has secured the Peace of his own Soul, and has made God his Friend: And is by both enabled to look thro' all the Clouds, and Darkness, of his present State, into the Glory which Christ has promis'd to all his Followers; but to none more expressly than to those who *"suffer for his sake; and whose light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment, shall work out for them a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory?"*

It is not only your Happiness, but your Glory too, that amidst all the Disorders, and Divisions, which have been among us, none have less need to *be comforted* on this account than your selves. Whatever the particular Conduct of some among you may have been, (for in that respect we must not pretend to any Privilege above our Brethren) yet, blessed be God, with regard to the *publick Service*, there have been as few *Irregularities*, as little *Disorders* to be complained of, as ever were in any *Church* whatsoever. Here therefore, as you have hitherto had nothing to cause any *Sorrow*, or *Trouble*, to you; so neither will you need to be *Comforted* on any such account: Or even to be exhorted to *encourage one another to correct what is amiss*; but rather to rejoice that you have the much greater *Comfort* of

ⁿ See 2 Cor. iv. 17.

knowing that (excepting only the unhappy Error, or Perverseness, of some few who still continue to *separate from our Communion*) there is nothing that greatly needs to be *amended*.

Indeed as to the other account which is more commonly given of the design of this Exhortation, there have of late been great Endeavours used to persuade us that we do very much stand in need of it. We have been told of the *Danger of the Church of England*; and have had *Memorials* publish'd to awaken us to the consideration of them. And to our *Comfort* let me speak it, they have been very seriously, and solemnly consider'd. And the result has been, that upon the strictest and most impartial enquiry, it was resolved by those who were the best qualified to judge in such a Case, the whole *Parliament*, That the *Church of England* is, at this time, in no more *Danger* than what *all Churches* in the *World* are, and ever must be in; but on the contrary, is in a *safe and flourishing Condition under her MAJESTY'S Administration*; as without great Ingratitude both to God, and her, we cannot but acknowledge it to be.

'Tis true, our *Sins against God*, and the *unworthy Returns* we have made to those whom he has raised up to be our *Protectors*, and *Deliverers*, call loudly against us for Judgment. Our *Divisions* among our selves; and that wretched *Hypocrisie* which both first raised them, and still keeps them up, by a pretence of *Zeal for the Church*; when all the while 'tis but too plain

that *Malice*, and *Envy*, and *private Interest*, more than any concern for the *publick Good*, have the chief hand in them; are dangerous and deplorable: And how far we may, by these means, in time, become ripe for Vengeance, I cannot tell. But as, at present, I know of no particular Reason we have to cry out of any other *Dangers* to our *Church*, besides these; so I cannot but think, that let what will be the event, I may securely join the two Branches of my *Text* together, and bid you first *be perfect*, and then *be of good Comfort*; as being sure of this, that either no Trials, or Calamities, shall befall us; or if they should, yet such a *Faith*, such a *Piety*, such a *Charity*, as I have before shewn the former of these Exhortations to imply, will suffice to arm us against them; and not leave us utterly destitute of all *Comfort* under them.

There remains yet one part more of the *Apostle's* advice to the *Corinthians* to be consider'd, *viz.* (3^{dly}) *Be of one Mind*; *live in Peace*; and which I the rather chuse to join together because they both belong to the same *Duty*, and tend to the same *End*, of working in us a *perfect Love*, and *Kindness*, towards each other.

He had before exhorted them to be *perfect* in their *Union*, or rather *Communion*, in the *publick Concerns of Religion*: That laying aside all Prejudices and Partialities, they should be firmly compacted, and joined together, in the Offices thereof. And now, to complete their *Unity*, he advises them to endeavour, as much as they could
to

to be of the *same Mind* in every thing. For *difference* in *Opinion*, especially if it be in matters of any great moment, will be apt more or less to create a *difference* in *Affection*; at least it will keep Men from a thorough Love of, and Intimacy with, those from whom they differ: And so the *Corinthians* by sad experience found, when St. *Paul* wrote this *Epistle* to them.

But because such is the variety of Mens Tempers and Capacities, of their Prejudices and Interests, that 'tis impossible for all Persons to *think alike*, and have the *same Notions* in every thing; therefore the *Apostle* adds a yet farther *Direction*, which all Christians may, and therefore should all, observe; namely, that whatever their *Opinions* be, yet still they should *live in Peace*; not *censuring* of, much less *quarrelling with*, one another: A fault which the *Corinthians* had been scandalously guilty of; insomuch, that as St. *Paul* himself complains, 1 Cor. vi. 6. *Brother went to Law with Brother, and that before the Unbelievers*.

And here, I fear, I am fallen upon a Subject that was never more necessary to be earnestly recommended to, and seriously consider'd by, all of us, than at this time. How far we are from being all of *one Mind*, the daily *Controversies* which arise among us, and that not only in *other Matters*, but in the very Points of *Religion* itself, too evidently shew. *One is of Paul, another*

ther of Apollos, and another of Cephas: And so implicitly do they follow their several Leaders, that they may truly be said to *be of them*; I mean, Profelytes of Persons, rather than of Things. They judge not according to the *Evidence of Truth*, but the *Opinions of Men*. If *Paul*, or *Apollos*, or *Cephas* have said it, that is enough to warrant a great many, to believe what they *affirm*, to be *true*; what they would *have done*, to be *expedient*; and even to pronounce their *Anathema's* against all who shall presume to doubt of the *Truth*, or *Expedience*, of it. And the Consequence has been, that by *differing* in our *Opinions*, we have disagreed in our *Practices*; and for want of being of *one Mind*, we have instead of *living in Peace*, lived in open *Strife*, and *Variance*, with one another.

This has been our *Misfortune*, as it was that of the *Corinthians*. We have had *Mens Persons in Admiration*; and depending too servilely upon their Judgment and Integrity, we have blindly given our selves up to their Conduct; and by means thereof have fallen into those Parties, and Divisions, which are truly our greatest *Danger*, as well as our highest *Reproach*, in the sight of all the Nations round about us.

If therefore you would free your selves from falling under this Imputation, (as both for our Honour, and Interest, we should all desire to do) you must resolve no longer to be govern'd by the authority of Men; but resume the Privilege we all pretend to be so justly jealous of, of judging for
your

your selves: And you must do it with freedom and impartiality. Let *Paul*, or *Apollos*, or *Cephas*, say what they will: We have no *Master* but *Christ*, nor any sure *Director* but our own *Reason*, well informed in the things we are to judge of, and religiously following the Evidence of Truth, on what side soever it lies.

And together with our *Prejudices*, let us lay aside our *Pride*, and *Animosities* too. Let us resolve never to think the worse of any one, because he differs in his opinion from us. 'Tis no new thing for the wisest Men to be mistaken; nor, if there be nothing more than pure Error in it, is it any great fault so to be. The best Men are still but Men; they may, nay they will be, sometimes in the wrong. And who can tell whether we who think others to be deceived, may not after all be our selves mistaken? But let us *love one another*, tho' we do not agree in the same *Notions* in all things; and then we shall *live in Peace*, tho' we should continue, after all our Deliberation, not to *be of one Mind*.

How much this would conduce to our present Comfort and Happiness; what strength it would give us against our common Enemies, I shall not need to say. 'Tis enough that my *Text* furnishes me with a much better, and more forcible Motive to engage you to this excellent Temper, namely, That if you thus *live in Peace*, then,

III. *The God of Love, and Peace, shall be with you:* The last Point I proposed to speak to.

How great a Happiness is comprehended under that Expression, 'tis hard to conceive, impossible for me ever fully to declare. *God* is himself an inexhaustible Fountain of Good; and where he is, there nothing can be wanting. It is the great Perfection of the Happiness of Heaven its self, that, when come thither we shall *be with God*, and *see him as he is*: And sure it cannot be much less for *God to be with us*. Thus much at least we must conclude, that in this promise we have implied the special favour, and protection, of him who can do whatever he pleases for us; and who being himself *the God of Love, and Peace*, will not fail to do very much for those who make it their endeavour to imitate him in those most useful and excellent Perfections.

But to be more particular.

1st, If we truly desire, and heartily labour to become thus *like unto God*, he will *be with us* by his *Holy Spirit*, to assist us in the attainment of all these admirable *Graces*, and to bring us to a great degree of Perfection in them. He will illuminate our Understandings, and sanctifie our Wills. He will fill us with a clear and comprehensive knowledge of the Revelations of the Gospel; and endue us with ability both to *believe*, and *do*, whatsoever he requires of us. Whilst the
wicked

Wicked and Disobedient are so blinded with their Lusts and Prejudices, that they can discover nothing great, nothing excellent, in those *Mysteries* which our *blessed Lord hath brought to light by his Gospel*; whilst they meet with so many seeming Difficulties and Contradictions in them, that they can no more be persuaded to assent to the Truths which he has deliver'd, than to obey the Commands which he has given us; we shall have our *Eyes open'd to see the wondrous things of his Law*: We shall behold, and admire, as well as believe, those great and noble Discoveries which we every where meet with in the Holy Scriptures; and shall delight to do that Will of God now, by which we know we shall be saved hereafter.

Thus shall we be *perfect* in what concerns our *selves*: How far it may please God to bless our endeavours to become *perfect in Love, and Unity*, as *Members of his Church*, too, I cannot pretend to affirm: But as 'tis certain that if we would all of us be persuaded to join together in this good Work, we should not fail to attain to the *utmost Perfection of it*; but should be as *united* in our *Communion*, as we are in all those Motives from which our *Apostle* exhorts us to labour after it, *Ephes. iv. 4, 5, 6.* so 'tis no less certain, that whatever be the result of our Labours, we shall find our own *present Account* in it; as well as *do some good to the Church of Christ* by it. For.

2^{dly}, If we thus endeavour to be *perfect* in our *own Duty*, and to promote the *Peace* of the *Church*, and of all the *Members* of it; the *God of Love and Peace* will be with us, and fill us with an inexpressible *Joy*, and *Comfort*, as the *present Reward* of our *Labours* after this *Peace*.

Such a Christian as this may be disappointed in his aim, and after all his charitable Endeavours, be so far from attaining the *Unity* he desires in the *Church*, that he may not be able so much as to *live* himself in *Peace* with many of his Brethren. When *Factions* run high, and Men are hurried on with the fury of their violent and corrupt *Affections*, to throw all things into Disorder; when *Pride* and *Malice*, *Self-love* and *Revenge*, are their governing Principles; and they care not how they rend the *Church* in pieces so they do but gratifie their own unruly Passions, and carry on their own wicked Designs; as it is impossible for the *Sons of Peace* to do any great good for the *Church*, so is it almost as impossible to *live in Peace* with such perverse Men. And this *St. Paul* was well aware of, when for this very reason he qualified his Precept with respect to *such Persons*, and *such times*, Rom. xii. 18. *If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all Men*. But yet as even under such uncomfortable Circumstances it is the Duty, and Praise, of a good Christian, to *follow after Peace*, and to seek the *Unity* of the *Church*, tho' he should meet with never so many difficulties, and
discou-

discouragements in it; so this he may be sure of, that what he misses *without*, he shall find *within*: God will give him that *Peace*, that *Comfort* in *himself*, which the wickedness of Men will not suffer him to enjoy *in the World*.

It is, I think, one of the chiefest Blessings a good Man would wish for, to be the happy Instrument of *restoring Unity* to a *divided Church*; and *Peace*, and *Love*, to a *factious* and *contentious People*. And next to this there is scarce any Comfort greater (except the inward testimony of a good Conscience towards God) than to have this satisfaction, that *we have done our parts towards it*; and that 'tis none of our fault that we continue still at variance with one another. And where both these are joined together; where a Man has at once both *Peace* towards *God*, and is in perfect *Love*, and *Charity*, with his *Neighbour*; where no *Malice*, nor *Envy*, nor *Revenge*, not so much as an *Ill-wish*, finds admittance, to disturb the Tranquillity of the Soul; but on the contrary, there is a *Conscience void of Offence*, towards *God*, and towards *Man*; there must needs be a continual plenitude of *Peace*, and *Satisfaction*. Such a Christian may be hated, but he cannot be disturbed: He may be injured, but he cannot be made miserable. The World may oppose him, but *God will be with him*; and enable him, in the midst of all his *Sufferings*, to be more than Conqueror thro' him who loveth him.

But,

But, 3^{dly}, And to conclude: If we thus labour after that *Perfection*, that *Unity*, and *Peace*, to which we are here exhorted, we shall not only *be of good Comfort* in all Estates of Life, and so find the promise of the *Text* verified in the *present Reward of our Piety*, but we shall also be more exceedingly blessed by the *God of Love, and Peace, to all Eternity*.

It was the peculiar Privilege promised by our Saviour to such Persons, *Mat. v. 9. That they should be called the Children of God. And if Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ*; as *St. Paul* himself warrants us to argue, *Rom. viii. 17.*

But *St. John* goes yet farther; he represents this excellent Temper not only as a certain *Proof* to us of our future Happiness, but as an *earnest* of it. He tells us that by this we are already *united to God*, and in that respect also (the highest and most intimate that can be) have the promise of my *Text* fulfilled, *That the God of Love, and Peace, shall be with us*. Let us hear how he Reasons to this purpose, *1 John iv. 12. No Man hath seen God at any time: If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and his Love is perfected in us. Hereby know we, that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. — God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.* And what the Consequence of this shall be, with relation to our *Future-state*, he declares in the next *Verse, viz.* That this will entitle us I do
not

not say to *Forgiveness*, but even to *Confidence*, and *Assurance*, at our *Great Audit*; *Y. 17.* For, *Herein*, is our *Love made perfect*, that we may have *Boldness in the Day of Judgment*.

And now what can any one desire to engage him to the practice of any Duty, that is not here promised to encourage him to the discharge of this?

If the *Hope of Success* in accomplishing of what we aim at, may be allow'd to carry a strong enforcement along with it to excite us to labour after it; we are assured that, as to the main of what the *Apostle* here recommends to us, we shall be enabled by God to become *good*, and even *excellent*: That we shall be *perfect in Knowledge*, in *Faith*, in *Piety*, in *Charity*; in all that may render us dear to God, and secure of *Salvation*.

If our own *present Peace*, and *Comfort*, be of any concern to us (and we know nothing is wont to be of greater concern to every one) here is a way that will not fail to bring us to it. Let us *be perfect*, and of *one Mind*; if we cannot *live in Peace*, let us at least *endeavour so to do*, and the *God of Peace will be with us*; and give us that *Peace*, that *Comfort within*, which the iniquity of Men may chance to deny us *without*.

If, Lastly, to be *secure of Heaven* and the *Glories of it*; if to anticipate our final Sentence, and to know while we live, that we shall be justified,

justified, and saved, when we come to die; be a Felicity greater than which no Christian can desire now, or hope for hereafter; this we shall not fail of, if we follow the *Apostle's* Direction. Let us *be perfect; be of one Mind; live in Peace, and the God of Love and Peace shall be with us*, to this blessed Assurance also; *The Spirit of God shall bear witness with our Spirits, that we are the Sons of God.*

O! let all these Motives prevail with you to pursue these Duties which so directly lead to your *present Comfort*, and will not fail to bring you to *Eternal Salvation*.

Be perfect; at least make it your endeavour to become so, in all the parts of your Duty towards God, and towards Man: In *Faith*, in *Piety*, in *Charity*; but above all, in a firm Adherence to the *Communion of Saints*, in the *Unity* of one of the *best, and purest Churches in the World*.

Be of good Comfort; suffer not either the Passions, or Prejudices, of Men to discourage you in the pursuit of whatsoever may make for the Glory of God, or the Peace of his Church. What tho' others have in vain labour'd to accomplish this? Nay, what tho' you your selves should, after all your charitable endeavours, miscarry in them, or even be the worse treated upon the account of them! This *Comfort* to be sure you will have, (and a very great one it is) that you will have nothing to answer for in the *Divisions of the Church*; but will have done
your

your part to persuade all Men to lay aside their Prejudices, and to join together in promoting the *Unity* of it.

○ *Be of one Mind*; if it be possible of the *same Judgment* in *all things*: But if that cannot be (as amidst the various Tempers, and Capacities, and Prejudices of Mankind, it can scarcely be expected) yet however have the *same Affection* for one another; and let not any *difference* in *Opinion*, lessen your *Love* towards those *from whom you differ*.

Live in Peace; and that with *all Men, Enemies* as well as *Friends*; at least let it not be your fault that you do not. If any peevish, or perverse Persons, will be contentious; if they will not only be restless themselves, but will disturb the Quiet of others, let the Sin be wholly theirs; and let them answer, both for the Guilt and Scandal of it.

And, *May the God of Love and Peace be with you!* May he crown all your pious and charitable Endeavours with such a Success; that both his *own Glory*, and the *Churches Peace* may be promoted by it!

May he fill you with all that *inward Joy* and *Tranquillity* of Mind, which a good *Conscience* alone can give, and which no *outward Troubles* or *Calamities* can deprive you of!

And having thus blessed you with the Anticipation of *some part* of your *Reward* upon *Earth*,

Earth, may he finally consummate all his Blessings upon you with an *eternal weight of Glory in Heaven*; thro' the Merits and Intercession of his dear Son *Jesus Christ* our Lord; to him be Praise and Dominion, for ever, and ever. *Amen.*



SERMON

S E R M O N V.

Preached to the
S O C I E T I E S
F O R

Reformation of Manners.

A T T H E
Parish-Church of St. Lawrence-Jury,
On Monday, December 31. 1705.



2 C O R. iv. 18.

*While we look, not at the Things which are
seen, but at the Things which are not
seen: For the Things which are seen are
Temporal, but the Things which are
not seen are Eternal.*



These Words have so necessary a Dependence upon the foregoing *Verses*, that we must first consider the Subject of the one, before we can give any rational Exposition of the other. In the beginning of this *Chapter*, the *Apostle* having

ving vindicated the Diligence; and Sincerity, that had been used both by himself, and the other Preachers of the Gospel, in the discharge of their Ministry; goes on *Verse* the 7th, to represent to the *Corinthians* how many Difficulties they had met with, and what Dangers they had run, upon the account of it. *We are troubled* (says he) *on every side, yet not distressed: We are perplexed, yet not in despair: Persecuted, but not forsaken: Cast down, but not destroyed: Always bearing about in the Body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the Life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our Body.*

But tho' such were the Tryals to which the Sincere discharge of their Ministry had exposed them, that it was even a Miracle that they were still alive, and in a condition to go on in the Work of it; yet was not this any matter of Discouragement, much less of Despair, to them; whilst they knew that they were not only doing the greatest good, that it was possible for them to do, to other Men; but were moreover laying up for themselves a glorious reversion of Honour, and Happiness, in God's Kingdom. On the contrary, the assurance thereof, joined with their earnest desire of attaining unto it, made them proceed so much the more vigorously in their Course, by how much the nearer they came to the End of it; *For which Cause*, continues the Apostle, *We faint not: But tho' our Outward Man perish, yet our inward Man is renewed Day by Day.* — *Whilst we look not at the things which*

which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: For the things which are seen are Temporal, but the things which are not seen are Eternal.

From which account of these *Words*, as they thus stand with relation to the *Context*, it appears that the import of them must be this: That tho' the first Publishers of the Gospel met with great Opposition, and were forced to run thro' many Dangers, in the prosecution of their Ministry; yet when they consider'd how much good they did to Mankind by it, and what a glorious Reward they were to receive themselves for it; they were so far from growing weary of their employ, or being discouraged in it; that they went on with Constancy, and even with Chearfulness, to encounter all the Pride and Malice, all the Prejudices and Perverseness, of a wicked World: And thought no Labours, or Difficulties, too great to be undergone by them now, which should intitle them to such an inestimable Blessing to all Eternity.

This is the plain, and literal Meaning, of the *Words* before us; and will afford us these two practical Observations, for the Subject of the following Discourse:

- I. That those who shall attempt to do any great good in the World, and make it their business to correct the Errors, or to reform the Vices, of it; must expect to meet with much Opposition; and to be exposed often-

times to the Rage, and Malice, of ignorant and wicked Men.

II. That this ought not to be any discouragement to them in such their Endeavours; considering both the great good they are hereby doing to Mankind at the present; and the glorious Reward which they themselves shall be sure to receive for it, at the *Last Day*.

And I. That those who shall attempt to do any great good in the World, and make it their business to correct the Errors, or to reform the Vices of it, must expect to meet with much Opposition, and to be expos'd oftentimes to the Rage, and Malice, of ignorant and wicked Men.

This is indeed a very melancholy Remark; but 'tis a Remark withal which the Experience of all Ages confirms to us to be most true. Never was there a time in which such Persons were generally so well receiv'd as they ought to have been: Nor, whilst Sin and Ignorance prevail among Men, will there ever be a time in which they must expect so to be.

It would engage me in too large a Subject of Discourse, to look back into the Histories of the *Old and New Testament*, and of *Profane Writers*; and from thence particularly shew you what a perverse Entertainment the Holy *Prophets*, and *Apostles*; nay, and even the *Philosophers*

losophers themselves, have met with, in their several Ages, and Countries. How little good they have been able to do with all their Exhortations; and that tho' they have enforced them with the exprefs Authority of a *Divine Mission*.

^a *Noah* was a Preacher of Righteousness to the Old World: He foretold the Deluge that was to destroy the Earth; and continued a hundred Years together, to exhort those of his Age to repent, that they might escape it. Yet neither his *Prophecy*, nor his *Advice*, had the least Influence upon them; nor could he persuade so much as one single Family to reform, and to save themselves.

^b *Lot* was in *Sodom*, what *Noah* was in the *World*: He had receiv'd the Ministers of God's Vengeance into his House; and there were but a few Hours remaining, 'ere the whole City was to be wonderfully consumed. Yet with all these Advantages, could not that good Man prevail with his own Children to arise and forsake the Place; tho' he assur'd them that if they stay'd, they should perish in the Destruction of it.

And if we look into the Times that follow'd after; what Tryals, what Afflictions, did those Holy Men undergo, whom God in their several Ages rais'd up to admonish and to reform his People? Tho' they spake in his Name, and it was not doubted but that they did it by his Authority, yet were they not regarded: But instead of re-

^a 2 Pet. ii. 5.

^b Gen. xix. 3.

penting at their Admonition, they hardned their Hearts; rejected the Messages of God, and persecuted those who delivered them.

'Twas a severe Reproach which St. *Stephen* (who was himself just ready to suffer by their hands upon the same account) cast upon the *Jews* to this purpose; *Acts vii. 51. Ye stiff necked, and uncircumcised in Heart, and Ears; ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: As your Fathers did, so do ye. Which of the Prophets have not your Fathers persecuted? —* But the Author to the *Hebrews* is more particular, *Ch. xi. 37. Where speaking of the same Holy Men, he tells us; that They were stoned; were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the Sword: They wandered about in Sheep Skins, and Goat Skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented.*

Such was the Reception which the *Jews* of old gave to their Prophets; and to the rest of those excellent Men, who in their Zeal towards God, and out of a true concern for his Law, would have persuaded them to live more worthy of both. And if we look into prophane Histories, the Example of *Socrates* alone, may suffice to shew, that the case of good Men, and great Reformers, was not at all better among the *Heathens*, than it was among the *Jews*. With what intolerable Scurrility was he exposed on their very Theatres? What Scandals were raised against him by impudent, and flagitious Accusers? And when this could not restrain him, but he resolved still to go on to reprove and instruct them, and did it with
a com-

a competent good Success too; how did they at last accomplish his Death, and put an end to his Correction, and his Life together?

I shall not need to tell you what was the Case of the *first Preachers* of the *Gospel*. The very *Chapter* before^c us sufficiently proves how troublesome, how dangerous, it was. God blessed the Work, and it prosper'd in their Hands. But the Men suffered, tho' the Religion conquer'd; and they saved others, for the most part at the Expence of their own Lives.

And when, in the following Ages, *Christianity* its self became corrupted, so that it stood in need of a Reformation; it is well known with what violent Opposition that good Work was encountered; and how it cost but little less Blood to restore the *Gospel* to its primitive Purity, than it had done to plant it, at the beginning, in the World.

Such has been the general Averseness of Mankind to all Amendment! And so unwilling are most Men to be made, either wiser, or better! And for the Reasons of it, they may, I conceive, be reduced to these Two.

(1.) The *Nature* of the *Work* its self. And

(2.) The *Circumstances* of *those* who are to be wrought upon by it.

(1.) As for what concerns the *Nature* of the *Work* its self; it is at once both difficult, and ungrateful. It requires great Skill, and Prudence,

in the Management; and can hardly ever be so cautiously, and inoffensively, carried on, as not minister some occasion of Resentment to those who are of all others the most dangerous to be provoked.

If we consider the former part of it, *The Reformation of Mens Manners*; it is certain that as well as they generally love their Vices, yet there are but few, who have the Confidence to stand up in the Defence of them. Sin is not only a Transgression of the Law of God, but contrary to Mens own Reason. It is as reproachful to themselves, as it can be scandalous to others; and upon all these accounts will not admit of any just Apology: Whilst Conscience joyns Verdict with the Reproof, and convinces them that they have deserved that shame, which therefore they always look upon the most charitable Admonitions to bring with them.

Now there is nothing in the World that Men are generally more tender of, than *Reproach*: To be found out in their worst, and weakest Part; and not be able to defend themselves in what they have done amiss. And when to this we shall add the Love which they commonly have for their Vices; and that Interest which their Lusts, by a long Indulgence, gain upon their Hearts; what wonder if we see them very hard to be dealt with in a matter that is, upon so many accounts, contrary to their most violent Passions: And averse to those Admonitions which both tend to deprive them of their Pleasures for the time to come;
and

and do withal reproach their Conduct, and bespeak them to have lived as foolishly, as they have done wickedly, in that which is pass'd?

Let us add to this the terrible apprehensions which such Persons are wont to entertain of the Duty of *Repentance*. What a Difficulty they conceive it will be for them to deny their Lusts, when both Temptation shall assault them; and their own corrupt desires strive for a Compliance with it. How hard the Exercises of *Confession*, *Mortification*, and the like *Penitential Offices*, appear to an habitual Sinner; which yet must be undergone, or he can have no hope of God's Forgiveness. All these not only affright wicked Men from a change of Life, but indispose them to the very Desires of it: And render them impatient of hearing such Advice as they can neither without Shame, and Terror of Conscience, reject; nor yet without a violent Struggle, and even Convulsion of Mind, have any Thoughts of complying withal.

It is true, as to the other Part of this Work, *The correcting of Mens Errors*, there may seem not to be altogether so much difficulty in that. Here our Passions have not so near an Interest; nor are there any such vehement Reluctances in Humane Nature to change a false Opinion, as to reform a wicked Habit. And yet we see how obstinate Men are, oftentimes, on this side also. What a dishonour they account it to be to them, that another should seem to think himself wiser than they are: And how hardly they will be

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convinced that they have been mistaken in any thing.

But especially, if an Opinion be grown inveterate; if they have been bred up in it, and have all their Lives taken it for granted that they were in the right; what a surprize is it to them to be told that they have been all this while in the wrong? How hardly do they believe it? And with what difficulty are they brought to consider the Reasons that are offered to convince them of it?

So strong is the Power of Prejudice, that it oftentimes blinds the clearest Judgment; and disposes even those who think themselves the freest from it, rather to acquiesce in an accustomed Error, than to exchange it for a certain, but new Truth.

Nor are Mens Prejudices alone in this case, to be encounter'd with; though that were enough to make the Work of Conviction go but slowly on: Their Interests, and Affections; their Lusts, and their Passions; are frequently concern'd too; and then tho' you should convince them, yet they will not be persuaded.

This was the case of many, upon the first publishing of *Christianity*. The common People were easily satisfied both of the Truth, and Authority, of it. They saw the Miracles of our Blessed *Saviour*, and his *Apostles*; and they weigh'd their Arguments. They had no Interests to blind, no Prejudices to byass them: And therefore

fore they clearly perceived the Force, and submitted to the reasonableness of what was proposed to them. But the Scribes and Pharisees were in other Circumstances. They had a long time sat in *Moses Chair*; and had gotten the Conduct of the People wholly into their own Hands: By this they made their Gain; and for this they were had in Honour and Admiration. And this Honour, and this Gain, they could not endure to part with: And therefore not all the *Miracles of Christ*, nor all his *Reasoning*; no, nor all the *Prophecies of their own Law*, could convince them of his Authority.

And when about two hundred Years ago, God raised up some wise, and good Men, to reform his Church, and to restore the Doctrine and Worship of it, to its ancient Purity; we know with what Obstinacy the Court of Rome, and the Clergy of that Communion, withstood their Endeavours: And we know how much it was their Interest so to do. In plain Terms, *Purgatory*, and *Masses*, and *Indulgences*, were too Profitable; *Infallibility*, and the *Headship of the Church*, too Glorious; *Confession and Absolution* too Politick Errors, to be parted with. The outward Pomp of Ceremonies, and Processions; the multitude of their Sacraments; their Images, and Reliques; their Exorcisms, Unctions, and the like Superstitions, were too Charming to the Eyes, and Ears of the People, to be given up to

† Mat. xxiii. 2.

Reason and Argument: And it held true here, as it ever will do in all other Cases, that where Reason is against Men, there Men will be against Reason, let the Evidence of it be never so clear and convictive.

Indeed could we be so impartial in our Judgments, as to be wholly indifferent to either side of the Conclusion; Were it in matters of *Practice*, and *Piety*, as it is in *Mathematical Propositions*; where Truth only is sought, and Reason is left to its free Determination; it would be no hard matter, nor very ungrateful neither, to correct Mens Notions, whatever it were to reform their Manners. But when the one is done with a design to influence the other; and Mens Opinions are corrected in order to the regulating of their Lives by them; 'tis plain, that in such a case their Lusts and Passions are as much concern'd to defend their Errors, as they are to continue on in their Vices; and therefore they will no more be prevailed with to change the one, than to part with the other.

Such Difficulty is there in the *Nature of the Work* its self, of *Reforming Mens Manners*, and of *Correcting those Notions by which their evil Practices are supported*. Nor is there any less to be expected:

(2.) From the *Condition of those who are to be wrought upon by It*: Who are commonly the worse kind of Men; and for that reason the most difficult to be either persuaded, or reclaimed.

It is one of the ill Effects of Sin, that by long Custom, and an habitual Practice, it blinds the Understanding, and hardens the Heart too. It corrupts Mens Principles, as well as their Manners; and renders them, by degrees, as incapable of judging what is right, as they are unwilling to be led by it. And when once Men are arrived to such a State, what can be done for them?

This was the case of the Heathen World heretofore, and is represented by *St. Paul* as the just Judgment of God upon them for their Impieties. *Rom. i. 21, 28. Because when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was blinded; therefore God gave them over to a reprobate Mind.* And when we consider the Obstinacy of many now-a-days, both in their Errors, and in their Sins: How impatient they are of good Advice; and what an implacable hatred they conceive against those who give it; we may justly fear that it proceeds from the same Cause. They have resisted the Grace of God's Holy Spirit when he would have reclaim'd them; and now there is no more space left them, either for Conviction, or for Repentance.

But this is not yet all: For in the Prosecution of such a Reformation we must expect to meet not only with wicked Men, but with a wicked World: Must oppose a Torrent, and stand in the Gap
against

against whole Multitudes, who are ready to break in upon us on every side.

Now this will add still more Difficulty to such an Undertaking: Whilst, by the generality of its Prevalence, Sin gathers not only Strength, but Confidence; and encourages Men even to justify those Crimes when they become generally practis'd, which being taken singly would not have born the least excuse.

'Tis true, Custom cannot alter the Nature of things; nor the practice of the whole World make that not to be Evil, which in its own Nature is so. But yet when a Multitude does wickedly, it takes off from the Scandal, tho' it cannot lessen the guilt: And Sin appears with so much the more Assurance, by how much the greater the Number is of those who commit it.

Now this yet more encreases the Trouble, as well as enlarges the Work of drawing Men off from their Sins; and of convincing them of the heinousness of them. Even good Men are but too apt to indulge themselves in such Liberties upon this account, as they would otherwise be asham'd of; and to think there can be no great harm in doing that, which they see the generality of Mankind agree to do. To restrain Men in such cases, seems to look like a Design upon their Liberty: And all a Man commonly gets by the attempt, is but the invidious Character of a precise, morose Casuist; who would make the way to Heaven more narrow than indeed it is; or, at least, than they can endure to think it should be.

It

It were an easie matter to illustrate this Remark, in a great many Liberties too commonly taken by some who would be thought none of the worst among us: But that one notorious Instance, of the *English Stage*, is more than enough to confirm the Truth of it. The Profaneness, the Lewdness, the Scurrility of which, tho' it be of its self sufficiently evident; and has of late been fully laid open, beyond all reasonable Contradiction; yet is it still followed not by the looser sort alone, but by many who one would think, should detest such Spectacles: And by withdrawing themselves altogether from it, should add to its Scandal, and leave it (as it deserves) to be a Nest only of unclean Birds; not fit for any, who either desire a good Conscience towards God, or value a fair Reputation among Men, to resort unto.

And thus have I shewn that those who will set themselves to the business of Reforming the World, must expect to meet with great Discouragements in the Prosecution of it; and for what Reasons it is they must do so. That the *Work* its self is of a very ungrateful Nature; such as Men are generally the most averse to: And that the *Persons* on whom it is to be exercised, are such, as have a more than ordinary hatred of it; and will be sure to set themselves with all their Interest, and Industry, to oppose it.

But what therefore must be done in such a case? Must Men be left to themselves, and not be at all contradicted in their Sins? Must we suffer Vice,
like

like an overflowing Torrent, to carry all before it, and do nothing to put a stop to its Career?

No, certainly! Neither the Glory of God, nor the concern we ought to have for our common Salvation, will allow of such a remissness. We must stem the Torrent, tho' we were sure we should be swallowed up by it; And be the more firm, and vigorous, in our endeavours; by how much the more difficult, and dangerous, the undertaking may seem to be. This was *David's* Resolution heretofore, and should be that of every good Man now; *Pf. cxix. 126. It is time to work for the Lord; because they have made void his Law.* Which therefore brings me to the other Point I propos'd to speak to, *viz.*

II. That all this should be no discouragement to us in our Endeavours, considering not only the *Great Good we shall hereby do to Mankind at the present*; but the *glorious Reward which we our selves shall be sure to receive for it at the Last Day.*

I shall say but very little to the *former* of these *Motives*, the great *Benefit which our Endeavours herein will bring to others*; because it does not fall directly under the Consideration of the *Text*, tho' otherwise 'tis one of the Arguments made use of to this purpose by *St. Paul*, at the 12th and 15th *Verses* of this *Chapter*; and such as ought to have a very great weight with us. For, indeed, what can more become any Man, than

to render himself a publick Benefactor to those among whom he lives? To expend himself for the advantage of others: And not think any Dangers too great to be run, any Labours too grievous to be undergone, so he may but do some eminent *Good* to the Publick by them?

This is that heroick Temper of Mind to which all Men have ever paid a singular regard. They have thought no Honours too illustrious, no Acknowledgments too high for such Services. They have run their Resentments of these things into Superstition, and Idolatry; and worshipped those as Gods after their Death, who had devoted themselves to the publick Welfare of their Country whilst they lived.

Now that, in the present Case, there is truly the greatest good done to Mankind by such endeavours; and that whether we consider them as *single Persons*, or with relation to *Publick Society*, (which nothing can more establish than Piety and Religion) no one who believes the Principles of *Christianity* can possibly doubt. And therefore, were we look no farther than this one thing; even this alone might suffice both to excite us to it, and to endue us with Firmness, and Constancy, in the Prosecution of it.

But there is more than this to encourage us in this case: For hereby we shall not only do the *greatest Good to others*, but shall also take the surest Method to *promote our own Felicity*. This is the Consideration to which St. Paul refers in the *Words* of my Text; and which I shall there-

fore at present insist upon, as the great Motive to stir you up to the discharge of that Duty which he design'd to encourage by it. Now the Force of this Argument consists in these Two Suppositions.

(1st.) That by endeavouring to promote the Piety of other Men, we shall effectually secure our own Salvation.

(2^{dly}.) That the Assurance hereof ought to stir us up to overlook all Dangers and Discouragements, that may arise to stop us in such our Endeavours. And,

(1st.) That by endeavouring to promote the Piety of other Men, we shall effectually secure our own Salvation.

For, indeed, what is there in the Power of a Man to do, whereby more highly to recommend himself to God's Favour and Acceptance? This is truly to direct our Actions to the Glory of God, and the Honour of his Religion. And when to this we shall add, that 'tis to exercise the highest Charity towards our Neighbour too; I know not what can be more desired to shew, that it must be also most pleasing to God, and profitable to the Salvation of that Person who diligently employs himself in it.

'Tis true, it is not possible for us, poor, sinful Creatures, to pretend by any thing we can do, to merit of our Creator. When we shall have done *all that we can, we shall still be but* ^a *unprofitable Servants*; for we shall still have made a lesser

^a Luke xvii. 10.

Improvement of the Talents which he has committed to us, than we ought to have done; and than he, in strictness, might have required of us. But yet by employing our Time and Abilities to this purpose, we shall the most nearly answer the ends for which we received both: We shall exercise our selves in the noblest Work that a rational Creature is capable of fulfilling; and we shall be rewarded accordingly by God for it.

Hence we may observe what extraordinary Promises God has been pleased to make to such as do this. *They that are wise, says Daniel; or rather, they who make others so; shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament, and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.* Dan. xii. 3. Brethren, says St. James, Ch. v. 19, 20. *If any of you do err from the Truth, and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the Sinner from the Error of his way, shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins.*

Nor are we to measure either the certainty, or greatness of our Reward, in this case, from the success of our Labours, but from the diligence and sincerity of our Endeavours. If Men will be obstinate against all Conviction; if they will not hearken to us, tho' we lay their Sins never so plainly before their Eyes; this shall not lessen our future Hope, nor should it therefore discourage our present Diligence. We have done what became us to convince and reform them: Let them look to it if they will not be reclaimed.

Nay more; tho' our Endeavours should meet not with Disappointment alone, but even with Scorn too: Tho' instead of doing our Brother good, we should only bring some Evil, or Danger, upon our selves by it; yet whilst we do not by our Folly, or Imprudence, deserve such a return, we shall be so far from coming ever the more short of God's Acceptance, that we shall rather be the more highly rewarded by him for it. This is truly to *suffer for Righteousness sake*; and will intitle us to the Promise of our *Apostle* in the *Words* before the *Text*, *That our light Afflictions which are but for a Moment, shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.*

So that howsoever the Case be with us; whether we labour with Success, and God gives us a plentiful encrease now in this present Time: Or, whether we plow the Sand, and meet with nothing but Dangers, and Disappointments; yet still whilst we have this Testimony of our Conscience to support us, that we heartily desire, and (according to our Ability) sincerely endeavour, to promote the Honour of God; the Truth of Christianity; and the practice of Virtue and Piety in the World; we may also be sure that we shall be plenteously rewarded for it; and find, in the end, that *our Labours have not been in vain in the Lord.*

Now this, I say (2^{dly},) ought to be more than enough to make us go on, against all Dangers, and Discouragements, that may chance to arise, to stop us in this Work.

For what is it, in effect, but this that we live for? What have we to do in this World, but to be useful to Mankind, and to lay up a Provision for our future Happiness in the next? Let me add yet more; what is there besides this, that is worth our living for? Let sensual, proud, ambitious Sinners, value as they will the Pleasures, the Honours, and Interests of it; yet when all is done, such is the Vanity that occurs in all our present Enjoyments, that I cannot tell (a few particular Friendships, or Relations, laid aside) what a Man should wish to tarry one Day in this World for, but to do some Good; or at least, to shew his hearty Desires, and Inclinations, so to do.

And if this be truly the only substantial Pleasure, which a Man can take in this present State; how much more ought we to be all animated herein, when we shall add to this, the glorious Prospect of that Eternal Reward, which we shall, by this means, secure to our selves in the other World. Where we shall be set intirely free from all the Troubles, and Dangers, we are here continually expos'd to; and shall be filled with the Fruition of such Happiness, and Delights, as we are now not able to utter or comprehend.

To shew you, more particularly, how great the Reward of our present pious Endeavours, in the Cause of God, and Religion, shall be; and, by Consequence, with what Zeal we should all of us proceed in the Promotion of it; neither will the time permit, nor am I able in any tolerable Mea-

sure to do it. It is enough that as we are sufficiently sensible of the shortness; and uncertainty of all our present Enjoyments, so are we no less evidently assured that no sooner shall we come to the end of them, but we shall be translated to a most blessed and happy State; where we shall rest in Hope, and be entertain'd with the clearest Prospect, and most earnest Desire, of that Great Day, when our Bodies being raised out of the Dust, we shall be *carried up by Christ into Heaven; and there remain for ever with the Lord!*

O! the Joy and Ecstasy we shall then be fill'd with, when being delivered from all our Sins, and from all those corrupt Desires, and Affections, which now incline us to them; and create so much struggle and contention within us; we shall live in the Presence of God, full of Purity, and full of Happiness. When no Passions shall disorder us, no Temptations assault us, no Dangers, no possibility of any farther Evils, shall threaten or disturb us! But we shall be wholly fill'd with the Love of God; and an universal Charity, and Affection, towards one another! And be instated in the utmost Fruition of that Peace and Comfort, which a perfect Innocence alone can give; and which, till we come to such a State, we cannot sufficiently either express, or comprehend.

Who can seriously consider with himself, and firmly believe, that by his present Endeavours he is laying up for himself such a vast Reward, and not resolve to go on and do his Duty, let a wicked World never so much censure, or oppress him for it?

it? This is a Reflection that may be more than sufficient to strengthen the most weak; and to animate the most cold, and negligent Christian, into a hearty Zeal for God's Glory, and his Brother's Salvation. And so, doubtless, it would do; would Men set it frequently in their view; and bring it home to their Consciences; and not suffer their present Interests, or Fears, to intercept the Prospect of it. But alas! this is our Misfortune: These things are to be seen only by the Eye of Faith; they are not present to us; and we are guided by Sense, more than by Reason, and seldom consider either what we are, or whither we are going. What is upon Earth we see, and we enjoy it too; what is in Heaven, we only believe and hope for: And we suffer our selves to be too easily deceived, and led away by the little imperfect Satisfaction we meet with here, from the promises of those Great and Eternal Blessings, which God has prepared for us in his Kingdom.

This is our Folly; I would to God it were not our Fault too. And the way to correct it, is not to prove that the Happiness of Heaven will be an abundant Recompence for all that we can suffer in our pursuit of it; (for that there can be no doubt of;) but if it be possible, to persuade Men to bring these Thoughts often to their Remembrance: *To walk by Faith, not by Sight: To look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are not seen.* This would effectually engage them on the pursuit of them; and make them hearty, and vigorous, in the discharge of
L 4 their

their Duty. And they would then feel, and perceive, more sensibly than I am able to represent it, what the Force of the *Apostle's* Argument in the *Text* is; *That the things which are seen are Temporal, but the things which are not seen, are Eternal.*

And thus have I done with the two *Points* I proposed to speak to. I shall make a brief Application of the whole to our own particular concern in it, and so conclude.

And 1st, If there be such just Grounds to fear, both from the Experience of past Ages; and from the Reason of the thing its self; that those who shall set themselves to the good Work of correcting the Errors, or reforming the Vices of Mankind, must expect to meet with much Opposition, and to run thro' many Difficulties, in the doing of it; then should the Consideration hereof engage those who have the Courage to go about it, to prepare their Minds for these Tryals; and not to be discouraged, or affrighted, when they shall come upon them.

It is, I confess, a melancholy Consideration to think how little he who labours the most industriously in the Cause of Piety, must expect to prevail against the Lusts, and Passions, of Men. That instead of being likely to persuade them to amend their Lives; and to reconcile themselves to God; he shall only run the hazard of provoking their Malice, and encreasing their Guilt. But however, if this be the Treatment we are to meet with, 'tis good to be prepared for it: And we shall

shall bear it the more easily, the less we are surprized by it.

Nay, but 2^{dly}; By proposing to our selves the Dangers, and Discouragements, which such a Work may be likely to bring along with it; we shall not only be the better prepared to *expect* them; but shall moreover be cautioned to act the more wisely and prudently, that so, if it be possible, we may avoid them.

There is hardly any thing in the World more nice and difficult, than to manage good Advice to the best Advantage. To know at what times, and after what manner to apply it. How far to go; and where to give off, in it. There are few Men so obstinate in their Sins, as not to have their soft Seasons in which they may be treated with about them; and, by a discreet Conduct, be possibly reason'd out of them. And where the Work is in its self so good, and the success of it of so great a consequence to Mens Souls; pity it is, but that it should be carried on with all the Advantages of Charity, and Discretion; at least should not be defeated, for want of a reasonable Care, and Caution, in the Management of it.

To be always reproofing, is the way to make Men avoid our Company; to be sure to be very uneasy in it. There are certain Times in which some things are to be pass'd by, others to be defer'd to a more convenient Season; and very often an occasional Hint will sink deeper into the Minds of some Persons than a formal Reproof.

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There is also a Care to be taken in the manner of applying our Advice. Some must be calmly and tenderly dealt with: We must consult their Tempers, as well as correct their Faults, and not aggravate their Sins, which it may be their own Thoughts will suggest to them under a more black and dismal apprehension, than we would desire they should. Others there are, who must be treated with a greater Plainness. They must have the whole Danger, and Guilt, of their Sins laid freely before their Eyes: And, as St. *Jude* expresses it, *We must save them with Fear, pulling them out of the Fire.* But yet even here we must be careful to convince them, that tho' we hate their Vices, we are concerned for their Welfare; and that 'tis our Zeal for that, which makes us so earnest to reprove and correct those.

Thus must we joyn the *Wisdom of the Serpent*, to the *Innocency of the Dove*: And *become all things to all Men, that by any means we may gain some.* And in observing hereof, we shall both be likely to do the most good; and shall take the best course to prevent those Oppositions, which generally lie against such Attempts.

But if after all our Care, we shall still be so unhappy as neither to be able to persuade others, nor even to secure our selves from Injury and Persecution; yet still,

^e Jude *v.* 23.

^f Mat. *x.* 16.

^g 1 Cor. *ix.* 22.

3^{dly}, We must resolve nevertheless to go on in our Endeavours, and look for that Reward of our Work from God, which the obstinacy, and wickedness, of Men deny to us.

It is no new thing to see the best Men, and the most worthy Undertakings, opposed and traduced by those who are Enemies to both; and that notwithstanding all their Care, and Diligence, to prevent it. *John the^h Baptist* went to work in a way of roughness and severity. *He came neither eating, nor drinking*; and the result was, that they said *He had a Devil*. Our Saviour *Christ* came in the common way of other Men: *He eat, and drank*, and conversed freely among the People. And of him they said, *Behold a gluttonous Man, and a Wine Bibber; a Friend of Publicans and Sinners*.

Thus the *Jews* decry'd these Holy Persons heretofore; and thus others continue to reproach the best Men now. The *Discipleⁱ* is not above his Master; nor the *Servant* above his Lord. If they have called the Master of the House *Belzebub*, we ought not to wonder, if they much more call them of his Household so. But *Wisdom* is justified of her Children: This was no hindrance, nor discouragement to them heretofore; nor should it be any to us now. We must go on, as they did, against all Opposition, and not give over our Endeavours, though Scandals, and Reproaches; Losses, and Persecutions, or

^h Mat. xi. 18, 19

ⁱ Mat. x. 24, 26.

^h Mat. xi. 19.
even

even Death its self, should threaten us in the pursuit of them.

This if we do, *we shall not lose our Reward*: If we thus *endure to the end we shall be saved*. Nay, we shall not only be saved, but shall be intitled to a greater degree of Glory in God's Kingdom. Every Sinner whom we convert, shall add both to our Security, and to our Exaltation. And we shall be by so much the more honoured by God in the other World; by how much the more we do and suffer in the discharge of our Duty, and for the promotion of Virtue and Piety in this.

And now I shall not need to say that in treating of this Subject in general, I have all along had a particular regard to you who have, in a more especial manner, dedicated your selves to this good Work of *Reforming the Manners*, and correcting of the Vices, of a wicked and scandalous World. Who have formed your selves into *Societies*, and fix'd upon the wisest Rules, and Methods, to make Christianity indeed effectual to the great end of its Institution; the Glory of God, and the Sanctification of Mankind: And whose Labours God has blessed with a plentiful Encrease, to the bettering of the present Age, and to a well-grounded Hope of providing for a general Conversion of that which is to succeed. Inso-much that your Zeal has been influential even to Foreign Countries: Who have applauded your Piety, and follow'd your Example; and begun, in like manner, to promote the Interests of Religion, not in Profession, but in Practice;

etice; not in the *Outward Form of Godliness*, but in the *Inward Power and Spirit* of it.

To offer you any Arguments to persuade you to go on, and abound more and more in the same Zeal, which you have for many Years shewn in this useful Undertaking, would be to injure your Piety, as if it needed to be provoked. No, I am persuaded you have too well consider'd the present Usefulness, and the future Reward, of what you been doing, to want any Exhortation, not *to be weary, or faint in your Minds*. I shall therefore, instead of insisting upon any such Arguments, end all with my hearty Prayers to Almighty God, for his Blessing upon your Endeavours: That he would so strengthen and confirm you in the Prosecution of them, that no Difficulties, or Discouragements, may ever prevail with you to depart from them.

May your Proceedings be temper'd with an equal mixture of Zeal, and Prudence; of Piety towards God, and of Charity towards those whose Reformation you desire, and labour to procure!

May you be the happy Instruments of restoring a true Sense, and Practice, of Religion; and of Peace and Unity to a divided People! Without which, 'tis much to be feared, true Religion will hardly long subsist, much less flourish and encrease.

May Men learn by your Example, your Instructions, and Exhortations, to *love God*, and *reverence his Sanctuary*: And so to hold fast to the
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the Communion of the establish'd Church; that there may be neither any Schisms in it, nor Separations from it; but we may all with *one Mind, and one Mouth, glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*¹.

May *Parents*, by your Zeal, be excited to take that due Care they ought, to *breed up their Children in the^m Nurture and Admonition of the Lord!* *Masters* to provide for the *Souls*, as well as *Bodies*, of their *Servants*! May the *Rich* be taught by you to be charitable and condescending to the *Poor*: The *Poor* to love and honour the *Rich*, and to glorify God on their behalf! May our *Magistrates* be moved by your Example, more carefully to do their Duty, by putting the Laws in a vigorous Execution against all Profaneness and Immorality! In a Word; May we all be persuaded to joyn in one *Common Society* with you for the same blessed Ends, of correcting first our selves, and then others; that the *Name of God, and hisⁿ Doctrine, may no more be blasphemed among us.*

This will shew us to be *Thoroughly Reformed* indeed: Not in the unhappy Sense that has sometimes been put upon that Phrase, to the utter overthrowing of all Order, and Decency in the Church; but in the true Import of the Expression: To be as pure in our Lives, as we are holy in our Profession; and in both such as becomes the Gospel of Christ. And if we thus glorify God on

¹ Rom. xv. 6.^m Ephes. vi. 4.ⁿ 1 Tim. vi. 1.

Earth, we shall not fail of being glorified by him in his Kingdom: But from this short State of Probation here, shall be translated to those Eternal Blessings of which our *Apostle* speaks; *Which neither Eye has seen, nor Ear heard, nor does it enter into the Heart of Man to conceive:*

To which, God of his infinite Mercy vouchsafe to bring us all; through the Merits and Intercession of his Blessed Son Jesus Christ our Lord: To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Praise now and for evermore. Amen.



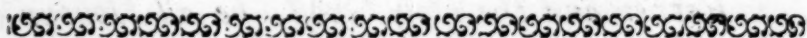
SERMON

S E R M O N VI.

Preach'd before the

House of Lords,

AT THE

Abbey-Church in *Westminster,*On *Friday, Jan. 30. 1707.*

MATT. xxvi. 51, 52.

*And behold one of them which were with
Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew
his Sword, and stroke a Servant of the
High-Priest, and smote off his Ear.*

*Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again
thy Sword into his place; for all they
that take the Sword shall perish with
the Sword.*



IN these Words we have an account of
what pass'd between St. *Peter*, and
one of those who came to apprehend
our Blessed *Lord*, in order to his Cru-
cifixion *. The *Chief Priests*, and
Scribes, had now resolved upon his Death; and

* John xviii. 10, 11.

Judas, who betray'd him, had brought their Soldiers to the Place where he was to be taken. The Guard had laid hold on him, and were just ready to carry him away to his Enemies; when *Peter*, not able any longer to endure such a Violence to be offered to his dear Master, *drew his Sword*, and began in his well-meant, tho' inconsiderate Zeal, to engage in good earnest for his Rescue: *And behold one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his Sword, and stroke a Servant of the High-Priest's, and smote off his Ear.* But our Saviour, instead of approving, condemned his Action, and commanded him to desist from his rash and unwarrantable Attempt: *Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy Sword into his Place; for all they that take the Sword, shall perish with the Sword.*

For the better understanding of which words, you may please to observe these Two things.

First; That the true ground of the Malice of these Men against our Saviour, was, that He set up himself for the *Messiah*; and under that Character publish'd his Gospel to the World. His Life, and Conversation, were Blameless, or rather Exemplary: *He knew no Sin, neither was any Guile found in his Mouth^b.* Even the Jews themselves, when they the most desired it, could lay no Crime to his Charge, except it were this

^b 1 Pet. ii. 22.

one, That by their Law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God^c.

It was not therefore for any Personal Crimes that these Men pursued our Lord with so much Violence. But, *He wrought many Miracles*: He had just before raised up *Lazarus from the dead*; and, as themselves reason'd in their last Council, in which they resolv'd upon his Death, *Job. xi. 48. If we let him alone, all Men will believe on him; and the Romans shall come, and take away both our Place, and Nation.*

This was his fault; and this was, in truth, all that they had to alledge against him. *Pilate* himself knew that for *Envy* they had delivered him^d, into his hands: And upon what their *Envy* was founded, I have before shewn; and the whole History of his Life sufficiently assures us of the Justice of the Remark.

But, Secondly: The other thing to be observed for the better understanding of the true Import of the Text is this; That our Saviour forbidding *St. Peter* to resist their Violence upon this account, that *All they that take the Sword, shall perish with the Sword*, may be understood to have spoken these Words in two very different Respects: Either with Relation to *Those* who came to *Apprehend him*; Or with Relation to the *Apostle*, who would have delivered him out of their hands.

^c Joh. xix. 7.

^d Matt. xxvii. 18.

If we consider them with relation to Those who came to apprehend our Blessed *Saviour*, they will then carry this Sense; That *St. Peter* should not draw his *Sword* against them, but should leave their Punishment to *God*; who would not fail to return their Violence, in a signal manner, upon them. An Interpretation the rather to be consider'd, in that the following Event did eminently confirm the Truth of the Prediction: *God* having, for this Reason more especially, brought upon that whole Nation one of the most terrible Destructions that ever fell upon any People in the World.

But yet, for all this, I think the other, and more common Application, of these words to *St. Peter*, as it is the more natural, so is it, for that Reason, the rather to be prefer'd; and then the Meaning of them will be this: That He should consider *Who he was*, and *What he had done*? And remember how severe a Sentence *God* had pronounced against all such as, without a just warrant so to do, should take the *Sword* into their Hands; Gen. ix. 6. *Whoso sheddeth Man's Blood, by Man shall his Blood be shed.*

We will, if you please, join both these Interpretations together, and out of Both make up this One, strong Argument, against *St. Peter's* attempt upon this Occasion; That he ought not to have drawn his *Sword* against those to whom *God* had committed the Power of the *Sword*; but should have left it to him, to whom alone it belonged, to punish their Violence; Put up thy *Sword* into

his place; For, All they that take the Sword, shall perish with the Sword.

In discoursing upon which words, with relation to the mournful Solemnity of this Day, I shall observe this Method.

- I. I will enquire, Why our *Saviour* would not suffer *St. Peter* to *take the Sword* in his *Defence*; but required him to leave his Cause to *God*, as the only proper *Judge* of it.
- II. I will shew, That it is still unlawful for any *Christians*, under the like Circumstances, to *take the Sword*.

Which having done; I will then proceed, from the Principles before laid down, to consider,

- III. What we are to judge of those, who notwithstanding so plain an Admonition to the contrary, not only *took the Sword*, (tho' that had been too much) but *took it* against that *Royal Person*, who alone had the *rightful Power* of it.

I begin with the first of these; to enquire,

- I. Why our *Saviour* would not suffer *St. Peter* to *take the Sword* in his *Defence*, but commanded him to leave his Cause to *God*, as the only proper *Judge* of it.

Now

Now that must have been upon one of these two Accounts: Either, *First*, Because it is at *all Times*, and in *all Cases*, utterly unlawful for any *Disciple of Christ* to take the *Sword*. Or, *Secondly*, Because at *that Time*, and in *those Circumstances*, it was not lawful for *St. Peter* to have done it.

As for the *former* of these, it is what even those who deny the *use of the Sword* to the *Christian Magistrate*, and will not allow him to draw it, either against an *Enemy* in a *lawful War*, or for the *Execution of Justice* upon his own *Subjects*, will not adventure to say. Even they acknowledge that there is one Case, at least, wherein an innocent use may be made of it; namely, for a *Man's own defence*, when he can no otherwise secure himself against the Violence of an unjust Aggressor.

But we need not be beholden to the *Socinian* for this Concession; the Holy Scriptures inform us, that there are several cases in which the *Sword* may lawfully be taken; and that not by *private Persons* only, for their own *just*, and *necessary Defence*; but by the *Civil Magistrate* too; both for the *Punishment of Evil doers* within, and to preserve his *People* from the Assaults of their *Enemies* without.

Many were the *Crimes* for which the *Law of Moses* required *Malefactors* to be put to *Death*. And with respect to one of them, that of *Murder*, God has expressly declared, that there is no other way to free the *Land from Pollution*, but

by the *Blood* of him that committed it; Deut. xxxv. 33. *For Blood defileth the Land; And the Land cannot be cleansed of the Blood that is shed therein, but by the Blood of him that shed it.*

And lest this should be thought inconsistent with the *perfection* of the *Gospel*, and to have expired with the other *positive Laws* of that Dispensation, St. *Paul*, in the thirteenth to the *Romans*, expressly puts the *Sword* into the Hands of the *Civil Magistrate* for the same ends, *viz.* The Protection of good Men, and the Punishment of the Wicked, and Unjust. For *Rulers*, says he^c, *are not a Terror to Good Works, but to the Evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the Power? Do that which is Good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the Minister of God to Thee for Good. But if thou do that which is Evil, be afraid: For he beareth not the Sword in Vain: For he is, (here too) the Minister of God; A Revenger allow'd, or rather appointed by God, to execute Wrath upon him that does Evil.*

The same is the account which St. *Peter* gives us of the *power* of the *Civil Magistrate*^f. He requires us to *submit* to his *Authority* for the *Lord's sake*: And tells us, that it was given him for the same Ends St. *Paul* had before mentioned, *for the Punishment of Evil-doers, and the Praise, the Protection, of them that do Well.* And the

^c Rom. xiii. 4, &c.

^f 1 Pet. ii. 13.

very Passage of the *Text*, would Men but allow it a reasonable Construction, implies the very same thing; namely, That *all those who take the Sword*; as St. Peter now did, without a lawful Warrant for their so doing; should *perish with the Sword*, should be *punish'd with death* for it.

It is therefore without all Controversy lawful for *Christians*, both *Magistrates* and *Others*, in several cases, *to take the Sword*: And, by consequence, St. Peter's Offence must have consisted in this, that at *that time*, and in *those Circumstances*, it was *not lawful* for him to have taken it. Let us therefore enquire, *Secondly*, What it was that made it *so unlawful*?

In answer whereunto we are told by some, that the reason why our *Saviour* reproved St. Peter for *taking the Sword*, was this; That God had appointed him to *die*; that for this End He came into the World; and that the *Apostle* therefore, in opposing those who were come to take him in order thereunto, withstood *God's decree*; and, in effect, *fought against God*. And indeed it must be allow'd, that the words which our *Saviour* subjoin'd upon this Occasion, do favour such an Opinion. *Thinkest thou, that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve Legions of Angels: But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfill'd, that thus it must be?* And St. John either abridging his Discourse, or relating some other Passage

which St. *Matthew* had omitted, speaks yet more expressly to the same Purpose; John xviii. 11. *Put up thy Sword into the Sheath: The Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?*

But tho' it must therefore be granted, that the Attempt of St. *Peter* was, upon this account also, worthy of Blame; and, as such, censured by our *Blessed Lord*; yet that does not hinder but that his Action might have been, as indeed it was, in other respects, Rash and Unwarrantable. And so the words of our *Saviour* plainly intimate: They contain a Reason of perpetual force; such as had nothing to do with *God's Decrees*; namely, That all those who should *take the Sword*, viz. after such a manner, and in such Circumstances, as the *Apostle* here did, should *perish with the Sword*, should be worthy of Death for their so doing.

To understand therefore the true ground of our *Saviour's* Reproof in these Words, we must consider, not what St. *Peter's* fault was with respect to *God's Decree* for the *Suffering of Christ*; which they have no manner of relation to; but what it was that made his Attempt so Criminal towards Man, as to be a *Capital Offence*; and, even in our Lord's Judgment, worthy of Death.

Was it that he *defended* his *Blessed Master* against the *Affaults* of Those, who, without any *lawful Authority*, were come to seize Him? But this is no more than what the *Law of Nature*, and the *Right of Self-preservation*, prescribes; and the *positive Laws* of all well-regulated Societies

cieties allow of; namely, *To repel an unjust Violence*; and, where other Means fail, *To defend a Man's Life, by force*, against those who, by force, would take it away.

Or, was it that He exceeded the Bounds of that Liberty which this *natural Right of Self-defence*, and *Self-preservation*, in such cases, gives to every One, against Those who seek His Destruction? But neither doth this appear. He made no undue Haste: He smote not before he saw what they were about to Do^h. He tarried till they had *actually laid Hands upon our Saviour*ⁱ, and declared their Resolution of carrying him forcibly away.

Was it his fault that he did not tarry for the Direction of our *Lord*, in answer to that Question which One of them, at the same Instant, had put to him, *Shall we smite with the Sword*^k? But in such cases as this there is no room for Delay: And supposing his Action to have been otherwise Innocent, it is hard to conceive how this alone could merit so severe a Reproof; much less make that which was in its self lawful, by so small a Defect, become a capital Crime.

Or lastly; Was his fault no other than what some Politic Interpreters of the *Church of Rome* have supposed^l; That He rashly engaged against so great Odds, that He could expect nothing less than a certain Ruine from his Undertaking? But where

^h Matt. xxvi. 50.

ⁱ John xviii. 49.

^k Cajetan. Jentac. vi. Q. 3.

^l Id. Ibid.

both the *Cause* is *Just*, and the *Means* that are made use of for the *Defence* of it are *Lawful*, the Greatness of the Danger enhances the Glory of the Action, and adds to the Honour of him who has the Courage to undertake it. At the most, in such a case, the *Apostle* would have been only guilty of an Imprudence: It might have cost *Him his Life*; but could by no means have render'd him so Criminal as to be *worthy to Die*.

In short; The only thing that can be imagined to have been capable of fixing so severe a Censure upon St. *Peter's* Action, must have been this; ^m That the *Persons* against whom he drew his Sword were the *Ministers of Justice*; and commission'd by a *legal Authority* to take our *Blessed Saviour*: And that being such, they were not to be *Resisted* in the *Execution* of their *Office*. And so St. *Matthew* tells us, *ŷ. 47. While He yet spake, lo Judas, One of the Twelve, and with him a great Multitude, with Swords, and Staves, from the Chief-Priests, and Elders of the People*; that is, from Those who had the *Lawful Authority* to send Them. But St. *John* is more exprefs; He adds, that they were the *Roman Soldiers*, who guarded the Temple at the Feast, with their *Captain, or Chief Officer*, at their Head. So that St. *Peter* could not but have known who They were; and must therefore have been the more inexcusable, in offering any Violence to Them, John xviii. 12. *Then the Band,*

^m Voss. Harm. Evangelic. lib. 2. cap. 1.

and the Captain, and Officers of the Jews, took Jesus, and bound him. And it appears from St. Luke, that his Apprehension was not only made by the Order of the Sanhedrim, but that some of that Council were present in Person at the Execution of their Order, Chap. xxii. 52. Then said Jesus to the Chief-Priests, and Captains of the Temple, and the Elders, which were come to Him.

These were the Persons who came to take our Saviour, and this was the Authority by which they did it. And therefore St. Peter's fault must have consisted in this, that He drew his Sword against Those who had a Lawful Power to Apprehend Him. For however the Jews were at this time a Conquer'd People, under the Power of the Romans, and governed by the Emperor's Lieutenant; yet still the Great Council at Jerusalem was allow'd to retain its Authority, and to exercise its Power, by their own Laws, as before.

It has, I know, been doubted by some Learned Men, whether they still retained the Power of Life and Death: And one Passage there is, in this very History, which seems to imply that they did not; Job. xviii. 31. where demanding Judgment of Pilate against our Saviour, they told him, that it was not Lawful for Them to put any Man to Death. Let this be as it will; Thus much is certain, that They had Authority to apprehend Him; To examine into the Crimes which should be laid against him; To have punish'd him with some lesser Punishment Themselves; and, if they saw

law occasion, to have deliver'd him to the *Roman Governor* for the *last, and highest, Sentence*. And therefore, whatsoever Malice there may have been, (as certainly there was enough of that) in their Prosecution of our *Lord*, yet hitherto they proceeded in a *legal Method* against him: And, doing so, it was not lawful for any *private Persons*, such as *St. Peter*, and the rest of the *Apostles* were, to oppose them with Force in what they did^a. This was the true ground of our *Saviour's* Reproof; And it is thus faithfully and judiciously paraphrased, by our Learned Dr. *Hammond*; "*Put up thy Sword into his place; Do*
 "*nothing contrary to Law; For all they that*
 "*take the Sword shall perish with the Sword;*
 "*All that draw, and use the Sword, without (and*
 "*how much more against) the Authority of*
 "*Those which bear the Sword, shall fall them-*
 "*selves by it; shall incur the Punishment of*
 "*Death.*

Having thus endeavour'd, with all the clearness I could, to represent to you the true Reason of that Reproof which our *Saviour* gave to *St. Peter* upon this occasion, I proceed,

II. To shew, That, upon the same grounds, it *still is, and will ever be, Unlawful*, for any *other Christians*, in the like Circumstances, to *take the Sword*.

Among all the popular Pretences that have been

^a Grot. in loc. Et de Jur. B. ac P. lib. i. cap. 3. §, 3. n. 7.

set up to justify *private Persons* in their unwarrantable Attempts against *publick Authority*, there is none that carries a fairer Appearance, or has done greater mischief in the World, than this; that it is *lawful to defend Religion with the Sword*: And that whatsoever the Enterprize would otherwise have been thought, this shall transform it into a glorious, and heroical, Undertaking.

How far this opinion has carried some deluded Zealots, I shall not need to say: I would to God our own Histories did not afford us too many Instances of it. But this I take to be clear, and certain; that had we no other Passage of Holy Scripture to convince us of the falseness of such a Pretension; no Directions of any ancient Writers to inform us what the Duty of a Christian in times of Persecution is; no Examples of Antiquity to shew us what his Behaviour ought to be; this single Passage, and Example, alone, might suffice to assure us, how directly contrary such a Principle must be, both to the *Practice* of our *Saviour*, and the *Rules* of his *Gospel*.

For, indeed, what can any one pretend to offer in excuse of such an Attempt now, that *St. Peter* might not with greater Reason have alledg'd in Vindication of himself upon this Occasion?

Has the *True Religion* such a *Right* on its side, as to be able to warrant any Violence against those who oppose it; and would oppress us upon the account of it? But surely no one can,
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with equal Evidence, prove his *Church*, or *Faith*, to be the *Right* now, that St. *Peter* could have demonstrated that for which he would have engaged, to have been the *True Religion* heretofore. Nor can any more maliciously, or injuriously oppose any *Religion*, or persecute its *Professors*; than the *Jews*, in the present Case, did both our *Lord*, and his *Gospel*.

Or shall we say, as some have done, that *Inferior Magistrates* may be resisted, tho' the *Supreme* may not; when they would otherwise destroy an Innocent Person, tho' in a *legal way*, and with an *appearance* of *Justice*? But those who here pursued our *Saviour* were no other: They were the *Subordinate Powers*; Men permitted, or at the most intrusted, and commissioned by the *Emperor*, to govern under him, by certain *Laws*, and within certain *Limits* prescribed to them for that purpose. And for the Person against whom they acted, I shall not need to say, that the Holy *Jesus* was one of the most Innocent, that was ever oppress'd under a shew of *legal Power*, and *Authority*.

Or, Lastly; tho' the *lawful Magistrate*, whether *Supreme*, or *Subordinate*, may not be resisted in the exercise of their *Authority*, shall we pretend that *those* who are commissioned by them may be withstood? But such were *those* who now came to apprehend our *Saviour*. Neither *Pilate*, nor the *High-Priest*, were there in Person; nor the *Council* in a Body: But they sent their *Officers*, and *Soldiers*; the *Captain* of the *Guard*, and it
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may be some of their *own Members* along with them, to see that they did their Duty. But they had a *lawful Authority* for what they did: Their *Power* was *just*, tho' at present employ'd on a very wicked Design; and, therefore, their Procedure being *lawful*, they were not to be *resisted*, nor in *defence* of our *Saviour Christ* himself.

And if neither the *Malice* of the *Jews*, nor the *Innocence* of our *Lord*; if neither the *Truth* of our *Religion* persecuted in its *Founder*, nor the apparent Marks of *Malice* and *Envy*, of *Violence* and *Oppression*, which appeared in the whole Course of their Prosecution of him; were sufficient to warrant St. *Peter* to *draw the Sword* in his *Defence*, against that *Legal Authority* by which they acted: We must conclude, that neither will any of these Pretences suffice to justify any other Christians, in the like Circumstances, now: But, if it shall please God at any time to permit the *Lawful Powers* to be against us, and make them that hate us to rule over us; we must follow the Example of our Blessed *Master*; and submit patiently to their *Authority*; and not, with this warm *Apostle*, *take the Sword against those to whom God has committed the Power of the Sword*.

Let this then suffice to shew, what the true Christian Doctrine of *Submission* to the *Civil Magistrate*, is. I shall not here enquire whether some may not possibly have misapplied these *Principles*; or have stretched them farther than they ought to have done; and, by that means, have
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led both themselves, and others, into great Mistakes, and no less Inconveniencies. What that *Authority* in every *State*, or *Country*, is, to which such a *Subjection*, as I have now been speaking of, is due; and against which no *Resistance*, no not to defend the *best Cause*, or the most *Innocent Person* in the World, may be used by *any of the Community*; is a Point which the *Municipal Laws*, and *Constitution*, of every *State*, and *Country*, must determine. But that wherever that *Supreme Power*, and *Authority*, is lodged; or in whomsoever it resides; to which God has commanded us to be *subject*, not *only for Wrath*, but *also for Conscience sake*: Concerning which St. *Paul* has laid down this Rule, *Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers*: And St. *Peter* himself declar'd, that we *must submit to it for the Lord's sake*; we are bound to pay either an active, or passive Obedience to it; must either do what it requires, or suffer what it inflicts; this is without Controversy the standing *Doctrine of Christianity*, and has been confirmed by the *practice of the best Christians* in all Ages of the *Church*.

Which being so, let us go on finally, upon these Principles, to consider

III. What we are to judge of those who, notwithstanding so plain an Admonition, not only *took the Sword* (tho' that had been too much;) But *cut off* with it that *Royal Person*, who alone had the *Rightful Power* of it.

And here I cannot follow either a plainer, or surer Guide, than our *Laws* themselves; which speak both with *Authority*, and *Approbation*; and tell us, in effect, what the *Sense* of the whole *Nation* is, or at least ought to be, both of *Them*, and their *Proceedings*. The ° *Fact* its self, they call, a *horrid, execrable, detestable Murder*; an *impious Fact*, an *unparallel'd Treason*: The P* *Court*, which decreed it, a *traiterous Assembly*; a *prodigious, and unheard of Tribunal*: The * *Persons* who thus unwarrantably drew the *Sword* against their own *Sovereign*, they brand as a parcel of *wretched Men, desperately wicked, harden'd in their Impiety*. And, lastly, as to the * *Principles* upon which they proceeded, the same *Laws* declare, “ That by the “ *undoubted, and fundamental Laws of this “ Kingdom, neither the Peers of this Realm, “ nor the Commons, nor both together; in Par- “ liament, or out of Parliament; Collectively, or “ Representatively; nor any other Persons what- “ soever; ever had, have, hath, or ought to “ have, any Coercive Power over the Persons of “ the Kings of this Realm.*

Such is the Censure which our *Laws* have pass'd upon the *Murder* of our *Royal Sovereign*, and the *Persons* who committed it: And the same is the *Sense* which both the *Word of God*, and the *Laws of all other Nations*, teach us to have of both.

° See Stat. 12 Car. ii. cap. xi.

P * Ib. c. xxx.

^r For to allow that some things had been done, under the Authority of that unfortunate Prince, less regularly than were to have been wish'd: That the *Prerogative* had been strain'd to an *exorbitant Height*, and the Subject too much provoked to complain, if not of the *King* himself, yet of those who were about him: and should have advis'd, and acted, more moderately than they did. To grant that when the *Parliament* met, with which our Troubles began; it was *excusable*, or even *fitting*, for it to have redress'd those *Grievances*, and reduced the *Prerogative* within its just bounds; and that those therefore who enter'd upon the proper Methods of doing this, in a *Parliamentary way*, without any ill Designs either against the *Person*, or *Government*, of the *King*, were not to be blamed: Yet certainly when this was done; and thereupon such ^s *Acts* were pass'd as abundantly repaired whatever the Subject had suffer'd before, and even secur'd him against any more Invasions either of his *Liberty*, or *Property*, for the time to come; for Men to proceed farther still, and without any *lawful Authority*, or *evident Necessity*, enter into a *War* against their *Sovereign*, who had so far condescended to all their just Desires; must needs have been as *illegal*, as it was *unreasonable*; and bespeak those who did it to have *taken the*

^r See my Lord Clarendon's *History of the Civil Wars*, Vol. I. fol. p. 6. 22, 52, 53, 54, 55, 58, &c. 221.

^s See 16 Car. I. cap. 10, 11, 14, 16, 20.

Sword in that Sense which our *Saviour* here forbad, and all good Men have ever condemned.

Had that excellent Prince, indeed, never called his *last Parliament* at all, nor given any opportunity to his People to redress their Grievances by the proper Methods of it : Had he not only continued to insist upon those Pretensions, which some had set up under the shelter of his Authority ; but so far improved them, as utterly to set aside the *Laws of the Realm*, and to *act Arbitrarily, without Law*, and even *against it* : And when nothing else would do, had he chosen rather to *desert the Government*, than to *Rule* according to his own *Oath*, and the *Fundamental Laws*, and *Limitations* of it : This might have warranted an oppressed *People* to *take the Sword*, for the *necessary defence* of their *Laws*, and *Constitution* ; and their *Religion*, and *Liberties*, founded thereupon. But to take up Arms against a *King*, whose Excesses had been moderate, and whose Necessities pressed him, contrary to his own Inclinations, to run into the most of them ; but especially, who had already, without Force, I do not say freely, redressed the Grievances of his People, but abundantly repaired them ; and secured them against the like Attempts for the future ; this must needs have been an unwarrantable Enterprize ; a War as unjustifiable in its Rise, as it proved fatal in its Consequences.

Nor will the pretence of *Religion* at all alter the Case, or make their *taking of the Sword* ever the more Lawful, tho' we should suppose that

there had been as just cause of Complaint in that respect, as some Men affirmed; tho' it is, after all, certain that there was not. It was upon this ground, as we have seen, that our *Saviour* was persecuted by the *Jews*. They sought his Destruction for this very Reason, that he professed himself to be the *Messiah*; and would have introduced a *new Religion* among them, contrary, as they supposed, to the Law of *Moses*. And yet *Christ* himself thought not this a sufficient warrant for *St. Peter* to *take the Sword* against the *lawful Magistrate*; tho' he took it only in defence of his *Master*, without the least design of disturbing the Publick Peace by it.

But alas! this is yet but a small part of that guilt we are now assembled to commemorate, and bewail. Our furious Zealots did not only *take the Sword* against the *Authority* of their *Prince*, but they stained it with the *Blood* of his *Sacred Person*. A Wickedness hardly to be parallel'd in any other Country; nor ever to be mention'd by our selves without Shame, and Detestation.

It was the Question of Holy *David* to *Abishai*, when he wou'd have smitten *Saul*; and it contains the Sense of all other wise, and good Men, in the like case; 1 *Sam.* xxii. 9. *Who can stretch forth his hand against the LORD's Anointed, and be Guiltless?* And yet, at that time, *Saul* was a Prince rejected by the same God who had made him King before; and *David* was appointed to reign over *Israel* in his stead. So that *Saul* was
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little more than *King in Fact*, but *David* had the *Right*; and that by an immediate *divine Appointment*, and *Authority*. But he *had been* the *Anointed* of the *Lord*; and he *was still* in *Possession* of the *Government*; and there was, upon both these Accounts, such a respect due to him, that his *Person* was *Sacred*; so that *no one* could stretch out his *Hand* against him, and be *Guiltless*.

Nay more; *Saul* at that very time, pursued *David* for this Reason, that he knew *God* had *Anointed him to be King* in his stead; tho' *David* had done nothing to disturb him in his *Government*, any more than he would now suffer any thing to be done to destroy his *Person*. And yet, neither the *Decree* of *God*, nor the *Violence* of *Saul*; neither his *Wickedness* in the sight of the one, nor his *Injustice* towards the other, were thought sufficient by *David* to warrant him to make any Attempt upon his *Life*; tho' *God* seemed by a singular disposition of his *Providence* to have deliver'd him into his Hands. But he left his Cause to *God*, and appealed to him as the *only Judge* of *Sovereign Princes*, *N. 10, 11*. *David* said farthermore; *as the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his Day shall come to die; or he shall descend into Battel and perish. The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's Anointed!*

This was *David's* Conduct, and these the Principles upon which he founded it: And the

^t Vid. Optat. Milevit. lib. ii. p. 47. Edit. Ult. Grot. de Jur. B. ac P. lib. i. cap. iv. §. 7. n. 6.

same have been both the Notions and the Behaviour, of the wisest and best Men, upon the like Occasions, ever since. But our cruel Murderers had other Thoughts; they acted by other Measures. God deliver'd their *Sovereign* into their hands, and they laid hold of the opportunity to destroy him. They *shed the Blood of War in Peace*; and made themselves at once the *Arraigners*, the *Judges*, and the *Executioners*, of their *Own King*.

A horrid, execrable, detestable Wickedness! The "*Scandal of our Country*; the *Wound and Reproach of our Holy Religion*! I would to God I might stop here; but I must add, the *Guilt*, the *Sin*, the *Pollution of the whole Kingdom*! The Effects of which we have *seen*, we have *felt*; we continue both to *see*, and *feel*, at this very day.

Oh! may it be the Subject of our *Sorrow*, and *Repentance* too! May we never think of it without Shame; nor speak of it but with an *Execration*!

But more especially upon this *Day*, set apart by publick Authority, on purpose to engage us to a *National Humiliation* of our selves for so great a Wickedness; may we all sincerely *deprecate* the *Vengeance of God*, which this *Royal Blood* calls aloud for to Heaven against us!

May no *Prophane Persons* either make a Mock of this Piety, or neglect to joyn in the Exercises of it! No *deluded Zealots*, either continue to justify what was then done amiss; or to entertain such

Principles, as may ever lead them to the like Villany!

May the *Sword* never more be *taken* among Us but by *Lawful Authority*: Either to execute Justice against Evil-doers at home, or to defend Us against the Assaults of our Enemies abroad! And then may we always draw it with success; to the Punishment of the One, and our common Safety, and Preservation, against the Other!

May our *Religion* evermore support our *Loyalty*; and our *Loyalty* be so happy as to defend, and secure, our *Religion*. This will make both our *Princes* Safe, and our *Country* Happy. While the *Sword* is thus used, there can be no danger from it to Either; but, on the contrary, it will protect, and support Both. This will suppress Malefactors within, and guard Us against Oppressors without. In a word; By thus *Lawfully taking the Sword*, in Subordination to Those who have the *Power of it*, We shall become a United, Peaceable, Flourishing People; as by the contrary use of it, we were made a miserable, divided, ruined Nation: Till God in his Mercy restored Us to that Orderly Frame of Government, from which We had departed; And in which, may He vouchsafe to continue Us, and our Posterity, till all these States shall be dissolved, and the *Kingdoms of the Earth, become the Kingdoms of God, and his Christ!* Amen, Amen.

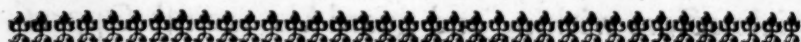
S E R M O N VII.

Preached in the Parish Church of

St. Margarets Westminster,

Upon SUNDAY, *January* the 8th, 1709.

Being the Day of the Yearly Collection for the
Poor Children of the *Grey-Coat Hospital.*



I TIMOTHY vi. 18.

*That They Do Good ; that they be Rich
in Good Works ; Ready to Distribute ;
Willing to Communicate.*



THE Words are part of that *Charge*, which St. *Paul* commanded *Timothy* to give to *Them that are Rich in this World*, &c. 17. The City of *Ephesus*, like all other great and populous Cities, abounded with Many of *These* ; and the *Advice* was such as if well Received, and duly

duly Observed by them, would prove no less useful to Themselves, than advantageous to Others.

There is Something in the *Riches of this World* so contrary to the *Spirit of Christianity*; so apt to take off mens Hearts and Affections from their Duty, and to run them into a thousand Vanities and Follies utterly destructive of all true Piety; that our *Saviour* seems sometimes to represent those Men as almost *Uncapable* of being *His Disciples*, who have any large Superfluity of Them*. Pride, Covetousness, Sensuality, Oppression; and an innumerable Train of other irregular Lusts, and Vices, commonly follow the Possession of Them: And hard it is for any one to abound in a plentiful enjoyment of the Good things of this World, without being proportionably Poor, and Destitute, with respect to the Other.

But what then must such Persons do to secure Themselves against this Danger; and to Sanctify their *Riches* (which, after all, are the Gift of God, and may be employ'd to excellent Purposes) to their more abundant Retribution in Heaven; instead of suffering them to Clog Them in their Passage, or even wholly to Close up their Way to it?

The *Answer* to this is plain, and fully deliver'd in the *Words* of my *Text*. Let them *Do Good*; Let them be *Rich in Good Works*; *Ready to Distribute*; *Willing to Communicate*: This will turn

* Matt. x. 23, 24, Luke xviii. 24.

their very Temptation into a Blessing; and entitle them to as great a degree of Glory in the Other World, as they now enjoy of Riches, and Superfluities, in This.

But tho' this therefore be the *Charge* of St. Paul, to *Them that are Rich in this World*, yet we are not to look upon it as belonging so peculiarly to Those, as not equally to regard, in the substance of these Duties, the *Meaneſt Perſons*. 'Tis true Men of moderate Fortunes cannot give so largely to the Poor as Those of whom we are now ſpeaking: And ſome may poſſibly be ſo very ſtrait and indigent in their Circumſtances, as not to be able to give any thing at all. But yet ſtill the *Former* of Theſe may Do ſomewhat: They may *Give according to their Ability*; and may be Ready, and Willing, to *Give gladly of the little which they poſſeſs*. And even the *Later* may have a *Bountiful Heart*, tho' they cannot ſhew it in the Distributions of a *Bountiful Hand*. They may Wiſh, and Deſire, that they could abound in this Grace, as well as in Others: And God, who ſearches the Heart, will accept of their *Good Will*; and no leſs reward Their *Charitable Mind*, than the Others *Charitable Works*.

And now that I may give ſome Light, and offer ſome Encouragement, to the Practice of a Duty ſo Excellent in its ſelf; ſo Acceptable to God; ſo profitable to Thoſe who fulfil it, as well as to Thoſe who receive the Benefits of it; I ſhall make it my Endeavour in the following Diſcourſe to ſhew,

rich

I. What

I. What it was that the *Apostle* here commanded *Timothy* to *Charge* his *Rich Ephesians* to Do, with relation to this Matter.

II. Upon what *Grounds* the *Duty* here required is founded; and what great *Obligations* lie upon All of Us to discharge it, as far as our several *Circumstances* enable us to Do. Which having done, I will

III. And lastly, Offer you some *Rules* for the better direction of your *Charity*: That for this *Duty*, which is in its self so *Excellent*, may be render'd yet more *Valuable*, by your *Wise*, and *Prudent*, Discharge of it.

I. Let us consider, What it was that the *Apostle* here commanded *Timothy* to *Charge* his *Rich Ephesians* to Do, with relation to this Matter.

Now That will appear from a brief survey of the several *Phrases* of the *Text*; which, being rightly understood, will be found to contain *Four* Summary, but *Comprehensive*, *Rules of Charity*: The *two Former* with respect to the *Work* its self of *Giving Alms*; The *two Latter* with relation to that *Temper*, and *Disposition of Mind*, which ought to accompany the *Giving* of Them.

The *first Rule*, is general, to *Do Good*: And where *Charity* is the Subject, to *Do Good*, in the language of the *New Testament*, is but another
Expres-

Expression for being *Charitable*. Our *Saviour* thus taught his Disciples to speak; and they soon learnt to *Write*, as well as to *Act*, after his Example.

When a certain Woman anointed the Head of the Blessed *Jesus* with a very precious Ointment; and some who disliked the Action began to ask, *Why such a Wast was made of it^b?* For that *this Ointment might have been sold for more than three hundred Pence, and have been given to the Poor*: Our Lord thus either Defended, or Excused, what she had done; *Let Her alone, Why trouble ye Her? She hath wrought a Good Work upon me. For ye have the Poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may Do Them Good; but Me ye have not always.* Whatever be the Meaning of that *Good Work* which this pious Woman did to our *Saviour*; it cannot be doubted but that by *Doing Good* to the *Poor*, we must understand the *Relieving of them*; and that our Lord intended it as an Answer to the Exception of those angry Disciples, that she should rather have sold *the Ointment*, and have given the *Price of it to the Poor*, than have poured it, as she did, on *Jesus's Head*.

It is in the same sense that we are told of *Charitable Dorcas*, Acts ix. 36. that *She was a Woman full of Good Works, and Alms-Deeds, which she did.* And to come still nearer to the Expression before Us; it is in the same sense we are to

^b Mark xvi. 5, 6.

understand that Exhortation of our *Apostle* to the *Galatians*, Chap. vi. 9, 10. *Not to be weary in Well-Doing; But as they had Opportunity, to Do Good unto All Men*; that is, to be Ready to Succour, and Relieve Them.

When therefore St. *Paul* here bids *Timothy*, *Charge Them which are Rich in this World*, that they should *Do Good*, his meaning is plainly this; that They should employ their *Riches* to the Exercise of *Charity*; and be the more Bountiful to those who are in Need. And if this be the true Import, as it evidently is, of *Doing Good*; it will follow,

Secondly, that to be *Rich in Good Works* must denote a *Free*, and *Liberal*, *Exercise of this Grace*. That such Persons as we are now speaking of, should not *Give sparingly to the Poor* out of their Abundance, but should *Give plentifully*; And as much Exceed Others in the Largeness of their Distributions, as God has been more Abundant in his Dispensations to Them, than He has been to Other Men.

And this is not only founded upon that *General Rule* of the *Gospel*, (the Reason of which is applicable to these, no less than to our more spiritual Performances) that *To whom Much is given, of Him Much shall be required*, Luk. xii. 48. but is necessarily Consequent upon the very Nature of the *Duty* its self. For if it be the *Duty* of every Man to *Do Good*, that is, to be *Charitable*; then We must either say that there is no stated Proportion at all to be observed in our *Doing of it*, but that He
who

who has the least, is obliged to give as bountifully as He who has the most; (which is unreasonable in the Supposition, and will be oftentimes found to be impossible in Practice :) Or we must sink the Exercise of this Virtue so low, that every One, tho' never so Moderate in his Outward Circumstances, may be in a Capacity of discharging it to as high a Degree as any One is obliged to do; (which would be in a good Measure to Destroy the Exercise of *Charity* altogether :) Or if neither of These can be allow'd, as 'tis certain neither of Them can; then it must remain that every One ought to proportion his *Beneficence*, to his Abilities, and, in the Words of our *Apostle*, 1 Cor. xvi. 2. *to Give as God hath prospered Him*; and by so doing hath enabled him to Give.

Thus far then I take the *Charge* of the *Text* to be clear, and certain; that every Christian, as He hath Opportunity, should be *Charitable*; and *dispense* his *Charity* the more *Bountifully* to Others, the more *plentifully* it has pleased God to *dispense* his *Blessings* to Him. But because it is not sufficient to entitle Any One to the Character of a *Good Man* that He does an *Act* of *Charity*, unless He doth it with a *Charitable Mind*; and God respects the *Affection* with which we Give, more than the *Quantity* of what we bestow; Therefore

Thirdly; The *Apostle* directs *Timothy* to *Charge* his *Rich Men* not only to *Do Good*, and to be *Rich in Good Works*; but withal to be *Ready to Distribute*; that is, to *Crown their Good deeds*
with

with a *suitable Disposition of Mind*, and to bring a *Liberal, and Beneficent Heart*, as well as a *Free and Bountiful Hand*, to the *Exercise* of this Duty. For that These may be separated, is certain; and every days Experience confirms it to us. Pride and Interest, Faction and Popularity, and a thousand Other Motives of no better a Nature, sometimes procure as large a Bounty to an indigent Person as Love and Charity. Nay and even Those have been induced by these Considerations to distribute to the Poor, from whom Pity and Compassion, would not have drawn a Penny for their Relief. But this, whatever it may seem to Men, is no *Charity* in the Sight of God; nor shall it ever be considered, or rewarded, as such. *Though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor*, says St. Paul, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. (and That is the most that any one can do, as to the *Outward Act*, and more than any one is ordinarily Obligated to do,) yet if I have not *Charity*, (which therefore the *Apostle* supposed even such a one might want) it profiteth me nothing.

So that to perfect this *Duty*, there must be first a *Charitable Mind*; and then, if there be an Ability, there must be a suitable *beneficent Distribution* also. The *Former*, even without the *Latter*, may be *true Charity*, and be accepted by God as such: For if there be a *Willing Mind*, it is accepted according to That a Man Hath, and not according to That he Hath not, 2 Cor. viii. 12. But the *Latter* without the *Former*, I mean the *Act* without the *Heart* and *Affection*, is but like
Prayer

Prayer without Devotion; or Fasting without Humiliation; or, in the Comparison of *St. James*, Chap. ii. 26. the *Body* without the *Spirit*; Dead, and Useless. It has the Shew and Appearance of a Good Work to Us who cannot search the Heart, and see the Defect of it; but to God it signifies nothing: Who knows the Man with all his seeming Liberality to have no *Charity*; that is, no inward Compassion for, or Affection towards, his Neighbour.

Nay but this is not yet All: *St. Paul* would have *Us Christians* carry *Our Love* still Higher; and to this *Readiness to Distribute* add,

Fourthly, A Willingness to Communicate: Which Phrase however some confound with the foregoing Expression, as if they Both signified but one and the same Thing; yet I take this Latter, to add still more Force, and Energy, to the Former.

The *Word* which the *Apostle* makes use of properly relates to *such Persons* as are *Joint Partners* in a *Common Stock*, or *Trade*, and so have a *mutual Interest in what belongs to it*. Now the *Christian Church* is, you know, represented in the *Holy Scriptures* as a *Society of Men* United together in a *Sacred Bond of Fellowship* with One Another. And therefore as there is a *Communion of Saints* resulting from hence in other Matters, so We are told there should be such a *Fellowship* also in the concerns of a *Brotherly Love* for, and *Charity* towards, One Another.

It

It was with relation to this Notion, that St. Paul exhorted the *Romans* to *Communicate to the Necessity of Saints*, that is, of their *Fellow-Christians*; Rom. xii. 13. And to pass from the *Apostle's* Precepts, to their Practice; it was upon this foundation that the whole Christian Church at the beginning had *All things Common*, Act. ii. 44. They brought their Particular Estates into One Publick Treasury; from whence a *Distribution was made to All, as Every One had Need*. And how far the same Spirit continued in the following Ages to work after the like manner, the Histories of those Times sufficiently inform us.

Here then is that extraordinary Disposition of Mind, which I conceive our *Apostle* design'd to recommend to us in this *Last expression*. That we should not only be, in general, of a *Charitable, Free, Beneficent temper towards All men^c*; apt to consider the wants of Others, and ready to relieve them; but, with respect to our *Fellow Christians*, should be *Willing, or, Sociable to Communicate*: Should look upon them as our *Partners*; Persons who have a *joint Right* with us to all that part of our Estates which Their Necessities call for, and our Abundance enables Us to spare for their Relief. That we should account it not so much *Charity*, as *Justice*, to provide for *These*: That to neglect to do it, would be to deny them that which by the Order of God, and the Nature of the Christian Church, they have a *Right*

^c See Gal. vi. 10.

to. In short ; That we should so think of every Member of Christ's Body, as of One of the same *Communion*, and *Fellowship* with our selves : For whose Support we are not only obliged, as in Other Cases, freely to dispense of our Superfluities, but to restrain many times our very Conveniences too ; and rather deny our selves what we might otherwise innocently allow, than suffer such a one to be greatly in Need.

This is that *Temper of Mind*, that *Disposition of Heart*, and *Spirit*, which the *Apostle* here requires of us towards one another. And he who is thus *affected* towards his Brother, and *does Good* to him accordingly, cannot fail of coming up to the full Height of this [Duty ; and {whatsoever else he may chance to want, will be sure to be *Rich in these Good Works*. I proceed,

II. To enquire, Upon what *Grounds* this excellent *Duty* is *founded* : And what great *Obligations* lie upon all of us to fulfil it, as far as our several Circumstances enable us to do.

And (1st.) As the *Occasion* we have for the Exercise of our *Charity* is owing to the *Providence of God*, who has in his infinite Wisdom thought fit so to order this World as to place men in *different States*, and *Conditions*, in it ; so we must conclude, from this very *Order*, and *Disposition* of Human Affairs, that it was *his Intention* that those whom he had placed in a *Higher Rank*, and to whom he had given a *Superfluity*
of

of the good things of this Life, should out of their Abundance provide for them that *Need*; and have no other ordinary Means of *Subsisting*, but by the *Charity*, and *Beneficence*, of such Persons.

Had all Men been alike in their Fortunes and Estates, there would either have been no occasion for this Virtue, or no Possibility of exercising of it. They would all have been in so good a Condition, as not to need Relief; or all in so bad a one, as not to have been able to supply one another's Wants. Whereas by dividing the *Riches* of *this World* into such a Variety of Degrees; as there are many who want our Assistance, so there are no fewer who have wherewithal to succour, and assist them. And all this being the Result of the *Divine Providence*, does at once both shew what every one is able, and what (for that Reason alone) he ought to account himself obliged to do, with relation to this Matter.

To confirm this Remark, let me observe (2^{dly}) That in consequence of that *Disposition* of *Things*, of which I am now speaking; it has pleased Almighty God to *implant* such a *Principle* in *All* of *Us*, as naturally directs *Us*, without any Instruction, to our *Duty* in this particular.

We have all a Similitude to, and a kind of Relation also towards, one another. We came, originally, from the same common Parents; We are endued with the same Reasonable Faculties; We live in the same World; are under the Influences of the same Providence; and upon all these ac-

counts are *Equal to One Another* in more, and greater Circumstances, than any we can *differ from One Another* in. Now all these argue for, and by a secret Impulse of Nature dispose us to, a singular Kindness and Esteem for our Neighbour, upon this very account, that *He is a Man*; of the same Kind, and Original, with our selves; and for whose Support therefore we ought to be concern'd, as well as for our own.

And thus far that natural Tendency, and Affection of the Mind, which we call *Humanity*, does of its self dispose us to the Practice of this *Duty*. But the *Principles of Reason*, and that *Desire of Society* which is implanted in all of us, will carry us yet farther. These will shew us that it is fitting, nay that it is expedient, that Men should *Love*, and *Help*, and *Succour*, one another. That every one should *Do to Others, as he would have Others*, in the like Case, *do to Him*. That upon the Observation of these Principles *Society* is founded, and the Comforts, and even Security, of Life depend. That it must therefore be the Duty of every one to act according to these Measures: And that he ought to be accounted an Enemy to Mankind, and to be Outlaw'd from all Society, who refuses to be govern'd by them.

But now what is there in the World more plain, than that if any *Rich Man* were *Himself in want*, he would desire; and, upon the Grounds I have here mentioned, would think he might justly expect too; that those who have a Superfluity, and
were

were able to do it, should *Relieve Him* out of *their Abundance*? And what then ought he in natural Justice, as well as Kindness, to conclude, but that he himself is *obliged to do likewise*.

Let me add to this (3^{dly}) the Consideration of *Interest* its self in this particular: A Motive that seldom fails of persuading those who are the most Covetous: and which no less than any of the other Considerations I have already offer'd, requires such a Distribution of us.

There is no one so *Rich*, as not to stand in need of the Help, and Assistance of the *Poor*. They are these who work for him; who manage his Affairs; improve his Estate; and make his very Riches themselves useful to him. Without their Service the most wealthy Persons would be oftentimes no less in Distress than the Meanest of those whom they relieve: When Age and Sickness come upon them; and they can neither eat, nor drink, nor move, but by the Help and Ministry of those about them. And what *Accidental Kindnesses* (especially in *doubtful* and *dangerous times*) the Greatest, and most Prosperous, may receive from the Love, and Fidelity, of those whom they have thus made their Friends; the many Instances we have met with of the Deliverances of such Persons by their Industry, and sometimes with the Hazard of their own Lives to save theirs, sufficiently inform us.

And now that I am mentioning those greater Changes which sometimes happen in States and Kingdoms, I must not forget the lesser Contingencies

gencies of Mens private Fortunes and Estates. I need not say to what Dangers they are exposed; and how often we see Persons abounding in all the Superfluities of Life, upon a sudden, brought themselves to Want. But sure I am, it will very much become those who are in the best Circumstances, seriously to think upon this: And when they do so, to consider withal, should this happen to be their own Case, how they can expect that any one should succour, or assist, them in their Wants, who have no regard to the Necessities of others.

And thus far the very *Laws of Nature*, and *Principles of Right Reason*, prove our *Obligations* to this Duty. But now (4^{thly}) *The Law of God*, delivered to us in the *Holy Scriptures*, will carry them still farther. For God, as he is the *Supreme Lord* of the *whole World*; who by his *Good Providence* dispenses our *Riches* to us, and still keeps the last, and highest Title to them, and can dispose as he pleases of them; so has he expressly declared our *Superfluities* to *belong to the Poor*: And has thereby, in effect, given them a Right to all that part of every Man's Estate which he can conveniently spare, and their Wants do evidently require.

Even under the *Law* God provided by his *General Commands* for them; and assigned a certain Portion of every Man's *Field*, and *Vineyard*, to their Use^d. He commanded the *Jews* to *lend readily*, and *without Usury*: Either not to take,

^d Deut. xv. 10. Psal. cxii. 10. and xli. 2. Prov. xxviii. 27.

or presently to restore, the *Pledge* of their poor Brother. If he were compell'd by want to *Sell Himself*, or *His Land*, after a certain time to set *Both* at *Liberty*; not to mention several other *Precepts* of the like kind, by which that People were directed to exercise their *Charity*.

I shall not need to say how highly the *Gospel* of *Christ* has improved this, as well as many other Parts of our Duty: I have already sufficiently done that, in the large Explication I before made of the Words of my *Text*. It may suffice to observe, that as *Love*, improved to its utmost Height, even that of *laying down our Lives* for our *Brethren*, is declared by our Blessed *Saviour* to be his greatest, and most proper Commandment; Joh. xiii. 34, 35. *A new Commandment give I unto you, that ye Love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also Love one another: By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another:* So with regard to this particular Branch of it, he has represented the whole Enquiry of the future *Judgment*, as turning in a manner upon it: Matt. xxv. 31, &c. *When the Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the Holy Angels with him, and shall sit upon the Throne of his Glory: And before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats; and shall set the Sheep on his Right hand, but the Goats on his left: Then shall he say to those on his Right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the King-*

dom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in; Naked, and ye cloathed me; I was Sick, and ye visited me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto me;—
Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me.

It would be in vain for me, after this, to offer any other Considerations to shew, what great *Obligations* our Saviour Christ has laid upon us for the *Exercise* of this kind of *Charity*. As nothing can be more encouraging than what I have now mentioned, so neither need any thing more be added to increase the force of it. And therefore taking it for granted that you are by this time sufficiently convinced both of the general *Obligation* incumbent upon *all Christians* to give, and of the particular Concern which *those who are Rich in this World* have, to give *largely*, and *bountifully*, to the *Poor*; I go on,

III. And Lastly; To propose some *Rules* to you for the better Direction of your *Charity*: That so this *Virtue* which in its self is so *Excellent*, may be render'd yet more *Valuable*, by your *Wise* and *Prudent Discharge* of it.

And because this brings home my Discourse to the particular Design and Occasion of it, it will be needful for me to proceed the more distinctly
in

in the treating of this part of it. To which end, I will

1st. Propose some *General Rules* to you for the *Direction* of your *Charity*: And

2^{dly}. Will shew, How those *Rules* do concur in an especial manner to recommend that *particular kind* of *Charity*, which I am now, with all affectionate Earnestness, to exhort you unto.

1st. As to the *former* of these; the *General Rules* by which we ought to *Direct* our *Charity*, in order to a *Wise*, and *Prudent Distribution* of it, they are chiefly these four.

(1st.) That that *Charity* ought to be esteem'd the *Best*, and *most Useful*, which is the *most lasting*; and at once both relieves the *present Necessities* of the Person to whom it is given, and will moreover be likely to keep him from falling under any more want for the time to come.

He who gives a Man Money to maintain himself, and his Family, for a Week, or a Month, does certainly very well: But if that Money would have procured him such an *Employment*, or have put him in such a *Way*, that by the Means thereof, and his own Industry thereupon, they might both have been supported for many Years; it cannot be doubted but that such an Application of it would have been more *adviseable*, and in the Consequence have proved of more *real Benefit* to the Person, and Family, to whom it was dispensed. In like manner; he who instead of

giving

giving an *Alms* to a *poor Child*, binds him out Apprentice to some honest and profitable Trade, whereby he may for Seven, or more Years, be kept for his Work, and learn his Trade; and by the knowledge thereof may afterwards be enabled, to maintain himself, and to support a Father or Mother, or some other indigent Relation; must be confessed to have done a much *greater Act of Charity*, than if he had paid for keeping him a Year in Idleness, and so had left him to starve all the rest of his Life.

(2^{dly}.) That *Charity*, which at the same time that it supplies a Man's *present Wants*, does also provide for his *future Happiness*; and extends to the *Soul*, as well as to the *Body*; must be accounted a much *greater, and more excellent Charity*, than such as extends to the *Body* only; and looks no farther than this *present, short, and miserable Life*. And therefore he who instead of *relieving* a dissolute, sturdy, lazy Beggar, *sets him to work* in some honest and useful Way; or, if he refuses that, sends him to a *House of Correction*, where he shall be forced to work; and thereby delivers him from his idle Course of Life, which is itself sinful; and from all those other Vices and Temptations which are wont to accompany such a Course; does without Controversy exercise a better, and more profitable *Charity*, than if he had relieved him in any other, tho' to himself a more chargeable Way.

(3^{dly}.) That *Charity*, which supplies the *private Wants* of the *Poor*, and will be likely, at the

the same time, to promote the *publick Good*, is to be preferr'd to such a *Charity* as reaches no farther than to the Person who receives it; nor brings any good to any one, besides him who is immediately relieved thereby.

And this again shews the great Benefit of *setting the Poor to Work*, beyond any other way of relieving them: Because that by this means they will be freed from their *own Wants*, and will be render'd *Profitable* to their *Country*; which will gain by their *Labour*, and be enrich'd by those who, in any other way of *Charity*, would be only a Burden and an Oppression to it.

To all which let me add (4^{thly}.) That that *Charity* which tends to *promote* the *Glory of God*, and the *publick Interests of Religion*, must be allow'd to be more Excellent than such as *terminates* upon the *Poor alone*; and to be of all others the *highest*, and *most perfect kind of Charity*; as aiming at two of the main *Ends* for which we live in this World, the *Honour of our Maker*, and the *common Good of our Fellow-Creatures*. And therefore they who *set poor Children to work*, and teach them how to get their Living; and withal provide for their *Instruction in Matters of Religion*, and breed them up to a *Virtuous*, and *Pious*, as well as an *Industrious Course of Life*; must be confess'd to have carry'd this Duty to the utmost pitch that it is ordinarily capable of; and to have taken the best Method to render their *Charity* acceptable to
God,

God, and profitable to those who are thus educated, and instructed, by the means of it.

These, I conceive are, in general, those Measures by which we should chiefly endeavour to *do Good*. Let us see

2^{dly}, Whether these *Rules* will not every one of them concur, in an especial manner, to recommend that *particular Charity*, which I am now concern'd, with all affectionate Earnestness, to exhort you to.

The Charity I mean, is that which hath been already so often proposed to you, and (to your Praise let me speak it) never without a singular Encouragement from you; of *Feeding, Cloathing, and Breeding up, a great number of poor Children in the Principles of Piety, and Religion; and to the Knowledge of all such things as may qualify them to live hereafter in the World, to the Glory of God; the Credit of their Benefactors; the Good of their Country; and their own Comfort, and Advantage.*

How far this *kind of Charity* has, by the Blessing of God, extended its self in a very few Years; what *Numbers of Children* of both Sexes have been taken into it; and to what distance from these Cities of *London and Westminster* (the Center where it first began) it has diffused its self into the *farthest Parts of this Kingdom*, and even into *Foreign Countries*; I shall not need to say. But sure if there be any *one kind of Charity* that may deserve to be preferr'd to *all others*; if in so
excellent

excellent a Grace as this, we may be allow'd to make Comparisons, and say that what we give in this way, is more acceptable to God, and more profitable to Mankind, than what is given in another; this is that way in which we may Hope, upon all accounts, to *do the most Good*; and expect the *largest Returns* both of *publick*, and *private Blessings*, from our *Beneficence*.

For to examine it more particularly by the *Rules* before laid down.

(1st.) What *Charity* can be more *Lasting*, more *Extensive*, than this? Which is design'd first to qualify *poor Children* for Business; and then, at a competent Age, to provide some suitable Business, or Employment, for them.

This breaks the *Habit* of *Idleness* betimes, and accustoms them to *Diligence*, and *Industry*; and puts a *New Heart*, and a *New Spirit* into them. It enlarges their Minds by the Knowledge of what they are taught at the present; and enables them farther to improve these first Instructions, by their own Care, and Application afterwards. It disposes them to love, as well as obliges them to pursue, a regular and useful Course of Life; makes them ambitious of being somewhat above what they were born to in the World: And when they come to be placed out to some honest Trade, or Employment, it prompts them so to behave themselves in it, that when their Apprenticeship shall be ended, they may live comfortably, and even reputably, by it.

How

How different is the State of such *Children* from theirs who have not had the benefit of the like Education? Who have learnt nothing that is good; who can neither Read, nor Write; who have no Trade, no Employment, to live by? But on the contrary, by an habitual Course of Idleness, are so corrupted in their very Minds, that they neither care for, nor desire any: Who chuse rather to Beg than to Work; and would if not Starve, yet Steal, or commit any other the vilest Sin, rather than settle themselves to any honest Business for the supply of their Necessities.

And yet this is the difference between *these Two*: The one by your *Charity* to them when *Children*, grow up to be Upright, Useful, and Industrious *Men*, and *Women*; are enabled to provide for themselves by their own Care and Labour: The others, for want of such an Education, become Lazy and Dissolute, Vicious and Debauched; always Begging, and always Poor; ignorant of their Duty to God, and useless Members, or rather Burdens, of the Common-Wealth.

But there is much more to be consider'd in this Matter, than this: Such untutor'd Persons are not only, as we have seen, utterly unqualified for any useful Business in *this Life*; but,

(2^{dly}.) Are, for the most part, in a much worse Condition with respect to the *other*. Their Laziness, and their Poverty, naturally prompt them to take wicked Courses: And having not any competent knowledge of, or concern for, their Duty, they pursue them without Remorse; and

and neither regard the Censure of Man, nor consider the Judgment of God against them for their Evil-Doings.

This is their Unhappiness; let me add, and even the Scandal and Reproach of the Society of which we are Members; that Persons should be suffer'd to grow up in a *Christian Kingdom* as barbarous, and unsensible of Religion, as if they had been born in a *Pagan Country*: As little acquainted with either the Knowledge, or Practice of their Duty, as those who never heard of *Christ*, or his *Gospel*.

How much happier are those, who through your kind Assistance enjoy the Benefit of a Holy, and Virtuous, Education? Who are both well instructed in what they ought to do, and are accustomed to fulfil it: And by being kept to School, and obliged to a useful way of spending their Time, are deliver'd at once both from the Temptations, and Sins, which the others for want hereof do too often fall into. Certainly that *Charity* cannot but be most pleasing to God, which at the same time that it relieves the *Body*, provides for the *Soul* likewise: And both frees those who partake of it from the Necessities of the present Life; and, in good measure, secures them from the hazard of Eternal Misery, and Damnation, in that which is to come.

How likely this *Charity* may be (3^{dly}) to *promote* the *publick Good*, I shall need offer very little to convince you. Every one knows how much the Wealth, the Strength, the Reputation,
2 of

of any Society, is advanced by the Labour and Diligence, the Cunning and Skilfulness of those who are Members of it. When therefore, through your Beneficence, Multitudes both of Heads, and Hands, shall be added to the improvement of the Trade, and Manufactures, of our Country; which would otherwise have been either altogether Idle and Useless; or, it may be, would have been employ'd to the Detriment of it; what can be more evident than that this must, in time, turn considerably to its Advantage; and bespeak your Charity to be as much for the *publick Good*, as for the Welfare, and Benefit, of those *particular Persons* who have the Advantage of it.

And yet there is still another, and a higher *Consideration* than all these, to recommend *this sort of Charity*, and that is (4^{thly}) From the influence it may probably have to *reform our Vices*; and make us both a *wiser*, and *better sort of People* than we now are, or probably should ever have been, by any other Means.

How far that unhappy decay of Christian Piety, and even of moral Honesty, and Sobriety; which is but too apparent among us, has been owing to the neglect of these sort of Persons, I shall not pretend to determine. Thus much is evident, that as our first Education has a mighty Influence upon all the following part of our Lives, so it must needs be a great Misfortune for Children to fall into the hands of ignorant, and careless, but much more of vicious, and irreligious Servants; such as have no sense, nor knowledge of their Duty;

Duty; or, it may be, are engaged in an opposite course of Vice, and Profaneness: From the *one* of which they can learn no good; from the *other* they may, and I fear, very often do, learn much Evil.

There are, I believe, but few Families among us, which are not too sensible of what I am now speaking: That have not more or less suffer'd upon their own, or their Childrens account, by the want of Justice, Sobriety, and Religion, in those about them. And surely then it cannot but be a matter of great Concern, both for the Glory of God, and our own Interest, to begin the Work of Reformation there, where we cannot but be sensible it is very much wanted; and may be of the utmost Importance to us. And this must be done not when such Persons are grown up, (for then 'tis commonly too late either to instruct, or reclaim them;) but whilst they are *Children*. They must be season'd with good Principles, and be accusom'd to a good Life betimes; and then we may hope they will also serve their *Masters* with Diligence, and Fidelity; not with Eye-service, but out of Conscience to their Duty, when they grow older.

Here therefore is another, and a very forcible Argument it is, for the *present Charity*: To fit these *poor Children* by Reading, Writing, and Casting of Account, to be more Useful when they come to Business; and by an honest, sober, and religious Education, dispose them to Labour and Diligence: To be Faithful to their Trust; Just in

all their Dealings; Careful of what is committed to them; Innocent and Useful in their Conversation; Pious towards God; and of good Example to all with whom they have to do.

By these means *Thousands* who already begin to be *thus instructed*, instead of having no Knowledge, no Principles, no Religion, will be brought both to understand, and to fulfil their Duty. They will be rescued out of the Jaws of the Devil themselves, and will probably become the happy Instruments of reclaiming many others. And, by all this, God's Name will be glorified; a Sense and Practice of Religion will be propagated; some stop will be put to Profaneness and Immorality: And who can tell but that, by the Blessing of God, the *Reformation* begun with these may go on to all the other degrees of Men among us; and render us a Holy Nation, a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.

And now, if there are so many Arguments, as you have heard, to recommend the exercise of such a *Charity* as this in the *General*; I may venture to say that you of *this Parish* in *Particular*, ought to be more than ordinarily Bountiful in your Encouragement of it.

In other places these *poor Children* are only *Taught*, or at the most *Cloathed*; here they are moreover *Lodged, Fed, and Maintained*: And by that means, the good Instructions they receive at *School*, are not effaced, by the ill Examples, and Conversation, they would too often meet with *at Home*.

This

This is certainly a great Advantage, but it brings a heavy Burden along with it. In the most plentiful times, it is computed at *Eight Hundred*; under the present Scarcity, the Charge of it will hardly be defray'd for a *Thousand Pounds* a Year. The *Number* thus instructed, and provided for by you, is very *Great*: No less than a *Hundred and Fifty Boys and Girls*; and of these, within about *Eleven Years* that this *Charity* has been carried on, above *One Hundred* have been placed out to some good, and useful Employments; who would otherwise have been at this time rambling about the Streets, with nothing, or what is worse than nothing, to do.

In other Places, this *Charity* is managed only by a *Voluntary Society* of Well-disposed Persons: It is your (almost Singular) Advantage, that this Work is here carried on by a *Corporation* establish'd by Her Majesty's *Letters Patents*; and enabled thereby to receive any Gifts, or Bequests, that shall be made to it, to perpetuate the *Good Work* to all Posterity.

How well what has been already given by you has been managed; as no better Argument can be offer'd, so I shall not need to mention any other, than to desire you to consider from what *small Beginnings* this *Charity* has, in a very few Years, risen up to that *glorious Height* in which it now stands.

This is an *Observation* that ought to be made both for the greater Encouragement of your Liberality, and to the Honour of those *Worthy*

Persons, who have been intrusted with the management of this Affair. It at once both demonstrates the Prudence, and Fidelity, of those who have had the Care of this Good Work; and commends your Beneficence, who have so plentifully contributed towards the Support of it.

Only, my Brethren, *be not weary in well-doing*; but as you here plainly see the happy Fruits of this *Charity* before your Eyes, so let that induce you, beyond all other Persuasives, to go on, and abound, in it more and more. The Design is certainly Useful; 'tis Pious; 'tis Excellent. Oh! let it not fail for want of a suitable Encouragement; but as ever you hope for a Blessing from God upon your own Children, and Families, shew some regard to the Necessities of those, who cannot otherwise provide for the good Education of theirs.

And may that God who ministreth Seed to the Sower, multiply the Seed which ye shall sow, and increase the fruits of your Righteousness! That, if it be his Will, you may reap the Benefits of it a hundred fold now in this present time, and in the World to come may attain Life Everlasting;

Through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory, now, and for ever.
Amen.

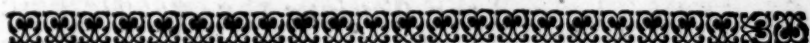
SERMON

S E R M O N V I I I.

Preach'd at the

PARISH CHURCH

O F

*St. James's Westminster,**April the 2d, 1710.*

ROM. X. 2.

For I bear them Record that they have a Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge.



IN these Words we have the *Apostle's* Character of the *unbelieving Jews*, or at least of the better sort of them. He tells us that they *had a Zeal of God*; and that when they rejected our Blessed Saviour, opposed his Gospel, and even persecuted his Followers, they thought that they did him Service. But their *Zeal was without*

Knowledge: It was a *furious, blind, erroneous Zeal*; and such as notwithstanding their *good Intention*, would end in nothing less than *Damnation* at the last. *St. Paul* earnestly desir'd, and pray'd for, their *Salvation*; *Brethren*, says he, *my hearts desire, and prayer to God, for Israel is, that they might be saved*: But he knew, that without *Repentance*, and *Conversion*, they must be *lost*, notwithstanding all their *Zeal*, nay the rather by reason of it; and therefore he gives them the true Character of it in the Words of the *Text*, that *they had a Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge*.

From which *Example* of that deluded, and obstinate People, and the *Censure* the *Apostle* here passes both upon their *Spirit*, and *Actions*; there are these *Three Things* to be observed; which I shall accordingly make the Subject of my following Discourse:

I. That there may be a *Zeal of God, without Knowledge*.

II. That where such a *Zeal* prevails in any Number of Persons, it will generally be the occasion of *much Mischief*.

III. That notwithstanding any such *Zeal of God*, yet if Mens *Actions* are not agreeable to *God's Will*, they will be accounted *Sinful* now, and be *punish'd by Him as such* hereafter.

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The Consequence whereof should therefore be this; to oblige Men to take heed that their *Zeal* be according to *Knowledge*; and not to think that they shall be any farther either *secure* in it, or *justified* for it, than as their *Zeal* is regulated by the strict Measures of a *right Faith*, a *perfect Charity*, and an *Universal Obedience*.

And, I. That there may be a *Zeal of God without Knowledge*.

A Truth as certain, as that *good Men* may be *Mistaken*; and think they *do well*, when nevertheless thro' Error, or Ignorance, they *do* the quite *contrary*. Nay more; 'tis as certain, as that Men of *violent Passions* are *apt*, or at least *liable*, to be led by their *Passions* more than by their *Reason*; and by that means to fall into such *Mistakes*, as in their own cooler Hours they would not be guilty of.

Zeal is, in general, the *violent Effect* of an *ardent Love*. If it be consider'd with respect to *our selves*, and the *desire* we have of *enjoying what we Love*, it carries us to an *earnest Endeavour* to attain it; and to *remove* out of our way whatever may be likely to *hinder* our *enjoyment* of it. If with relation to the *Person whom we Love*, it moves us no less vehemently to do what we think will be pleasing to him; and to *oppose* whatsoever we take to be Repugnant to his *Will*, his *Honour*, or *Interest*. But to which soever of these it is applied, still *Zeal* supposes the *Love* to be *very great*; and, by Consequence, the *Effects* of it to be *Strong*, and *Violent*. And

therefore as the *Love of God*, and the *desire* of our *own Eternal Salvation*, ought to be in *all Men*, and in *all good Men* truly is, the highest of all *Loves*, and *Desires*; so must the *Zeal* for these be proportionably *Strong*, and *Vehement*. And if it chance to be kindled in the Breast of a *warm, impetuous Votary*, it will *burn* with *Fury*; and without great *Care*, exceed the *Bounds* not only of *Reason*, but of *Religion* too, in its *Operation*.

For to consider it more particularly, in each of the *two Respects* I have before-mentioned.

First, He who *Loves God* with *all his Heart*, must needs desire to *enjoy Him*; and, in order thereunto, will make it his *earnest* Endeavour to *remove* whatsoever may be likely to *obstruct* his *Enjoyment of Him*. And thus far our *Zeal* is in the general, *Lawful*, or rather *Commendable*. But still here may be room, in the pursuit of this *End*, excellent as it is, for *Mistakes* to come in; and if our *Zeal* be without *Knowledge*, it may run us into *Superstition*, and even into *Sin*. For,

(1st.) To be *zealous* in *avoiding* what is *really Sinful*; *forbidden* by *God*, and *destructive* of our *Enjoyment of Him*; is without *Controversy* highly *Good* and *Praise-worthy*. Our *Duty* requires it, and our very *Interest* obliges us to be *firm*, and *constant*, in striving against it. But yet a *Man* may be *deceived* in judging of *what* is *forbidden*: He may think that to be *Sinful* which
really

really is not; and so his *Zeal*, for want of being guided by *Knowledge*, may become utterly vain, and unprofitable.

This was the Case of the *Jewish-Converts*: They thought it to be *unlawful* to eat of *such Meats* as the *Law of Moses* had forbidden; and they forbore so to do, out of *Conscience* to *God's Commandment*. Nay so *Zealous* were they in this Particular, as to account it their Duty to *abstain* from such *Meats themselves*, and to impose the like forbearance upon the *Gentile Converts*. But they were *mistaken* in their *Judgment* of their *Duty* as to this Matter: And their *Zeal*, for want of *Knowledge*, served only to bind down a heavy Burden, without need, upon their *own Shoulders*; and to prompt them to judge too *hardly* of *others*, who understood their *Christian Liberty* better than themselves.

I doubt not but there have been many among us, who have verily thought the few *Innocent*, and I must beg leave to add, even *Decent Ceremonies* of our *Church*, to be *Superstitious*, and *Unlawful*: Who have look'd upon our *Common-Prayer*, as little better than the *Mass-Book* in *English*: Our truly *Primitive* and *Apostolical Episcopacy*, as the result of *Popish Pride*, and *Usurpation*: And our whole *Constitution*, upon these and the like accounts, such as no good *Christian* could allow of. They have been taught by their *Leaders* to think *amiss* of us; and, tho' they know not why, yet they esteem it a Matter worthy of their *Zeal*, to *separate* from us,
and

and to *Judge*, nay to *Speak*, oftentimes, very *hardly* of us. But their Concern to *oppose* what they take to be *unlawful* on the one hand, has certainly run them into a *grievous Sin* on the other: Whilst to avoid an *imaginary Superstition*, they have fallen into a *real Schism*; and must answer to God for all the ill Consequences of *separating* from a *Well-establish'd Church*, upon the account of such things as are *Lawful*, or even *Expedient*; and, in the general, so *Necessary*, that no *Church* whatsoever can possibly subsist without them.

And as Men may esteem some things to be *Sinful*, which indeed are not; and by that means *misapply* their *Zeal* on that side; so may they, (2^{dly}.) No less account other things to be a *Matter of Duty*, which God has not *required*; and be *Zealous*, without need, for the *Observation* of them.

This was again the Case of those *Jewish Converts* whom I before mentioned. They thought themselves obliged to *abstain* from such *Meats* as the *Law* had *Forbidden*; and to *observe* such *Rites*, and *Ceremonies*, as the same *Law* had commanded to be observed^a. And tho' in other Respects they *obey'd* the *Gospel of Christ*, yet in these Particulars they still continued *Zealous* for their *former Institutions*; and forced the very *Apostles* themselves to *allow of*, and some times even to *join*

^a Rom. xiv. 5, 6. Gal. iv. 10. Colof. ii. 16.

with them in, the same Observations, Acts xiv. 5, &c. xxi. 20.

I need not tell you how many foolish, and superstitious Practices, those of the Church of Rome recommend to their People as Matters of Duty; and their deluded Votaries more zealously observe, than the weightier Parts of the Gospel, Justice, Mercy, and Righteousness. We may bear them record that they have a Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge. They would as soon renounce Christianity, as Popery; and neglect rather to Pray to God thro' Jesus Christ, than not join the Merits, and Intercession, of the Blessed Virgin and their Saints, with his Mediation.

And I would to God that Men's Zeal were unreasonable only; But alas! it is too often sinful also: Whilst

(3^{dly}.) They are Zealous for such things as are not only not Required by God, and so no Matter of Duty; but are contrary to his Will; and, as such, unlawful to be done.

This was the Case of the unconverted Jews, of whom the Apostle here speaks. They accounted themselves obliged to hold fast to the Law of Moses, as the Institution of God, and necessary to be observed out of Conscience to him: And the Result was, that thro' their Zeal for that, they deny'd, rejected, and at last crucify'd, the Lord of Glory. They opposed his Gospel, and persecuted his Disciples; and when they kill'd them, thought that they did God Service.

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This was their *Sin*, the sad Effect of their *mistaken Zeal*! Nor is the Case of those of the *Other Communion*, much better at this Day. They esteem it their *Duty* to *believe* as *their Church believes*, and to *do* as they are *directed to do*: And so out of *Conscience to God*, they *corrupt the Faith*, and *transgress the Commandments of Christ*: They *believe* such things as are *utterly inconsistent* with the *Gospel-Truths*; and *do* such things as can *never be reconcil'd* with the *Gospel Piety*.

Were we not too well acquainted with their *Blindness*, as well as *Zeal*, we should hardly think it possible for any *Christians* to be so far deluded, as, in *Matters of Faith*, to *trust* in their *own Good Works*; to *boast of Works of Merit*, and *Super-erogation*; to think that any other *Propitiatory Sacrifices* were to be *offer'd to God* for *Sin*, besides that *one, Perfect, and All-sufficient Sacrifice of the Cross*. But much more to be so corrupted, as in *Matters of Practice*, to *Worship Images*, *Pray to Saints*, *Administer the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist in one Kind*, *Keep the Publick Service of the Church in an Unknown Tongue*; and, as much as is possible, *deny the very Scriptures themselves to the People*: And, which is still more, condemn all those as *obstinate Hereticks*, who *will not*; or rather, to speak more properly, *cannot*, be so far deluded, as to *believe*, and *practise*, as they do. Yet to this height of *Error*, and *Impiety*, has the want of *Christian Knowledge* carried whole *Churches and Countries*;
and

and no doubt many have a true *Zeal of God* in their Concern for these Things, which are so *contrary* to his *Honour*, as well as *repugnant* to his *Revelations*.

Such strange Mistakes are Men capable of falling into in this *first kind of Zeal*; which arises from their *Desire of enjoying God*, and being made for ever *Happy* with him.

There is another sort of *Zeal* founded upon the same *Love of God*, with that I have now been considering, but under a different *Respect*; namely,

Secondly, As it looks not to our *own Happiness*, in the *Enjoyment* of him, but to his *Honour*: When being highly concern'd for the *Glory of God*, we are *Zealous* at once both to do what we can to *Promote* it, and to *prevent*, or *correct*, whatever we take to be contrary thereunto. Now this also is, in its *Principle*, a *Commendable Zeal*; but yet if not regulated with some competent *Knowledge* of what *does truly make for God's Honour*, or is *contrary thereunto*; it may lead us into *great Errors*, and, in Consequence thereof, engage us in *great Sins*.

The *Jews* heretofore so acknowledg'd the *Unity of the Divine Nature*, as to think it an *Impeachment of the Glory of God*, for our *Saviour* to pretend to be his *Son*; and, in Consequence thereof, to *Make himself Equal with God*, Joh. v. 18.—x. 30, 33. They esteem'd it to be the *Singular Prerogative of God to Forgive Sin*; and in their *Zeal* for his *Honour* in this Particular,

lar, they condemned our Blessed *Lord* as *Guilty of Blasphemy* for pretending to do it, *Matt. ix. 3.* But they did not consider either the *Power*, or *Dignity*, of *Christ*: And therefore their *Zeal* was as *Groundless*, as it was *Sinful*; whilst by *dishonouring the Son*, they *dishonoured the Father* also; and *acted contrary to the Glory of God*, in the very things which they did for the *Preservation* of it.

Let me add yet one *Remark* more with Respect to *Both* these *Kinds of Zeal*; and it is this: That if *Mens Zeal* be not guided by *Knowledge*, it may be *right* in its *Object*; The *Things* for which they are *Zealous*, may be *truly Good*, and even *worthy to be contended for*; and yet they may pursue them by such *Means* as may be altogether *Unfit*, and *Unjustifiable*: And this may make what is *Good* in *its self*, become *utterly Evil* to them.

The *Jews* in our *Text* are an eminent Instance of the *Truth* of this *Remark*. They *Crucified* our *Saviour*, and *Persecuted* his *Followers*; They *Defamed*, and *Calumniated* both: They *suborned False Witnesses* against *Him*; They ascribed the very *Miracles* which he wrought by the *Power of God*, to the *Help of the Devil*; They drove his *Disciples* into *strange Countries*: And consider'd not that such a *Procedure* would have been *wicked*, and *unwarrantable*, tho' our *Saviour* had really been as *false a Prophet*, and *Christianity* as *false a Religion*, as *themselves* either *thought*, or *pretended* them to be.

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To be *stedfast* in the *True Faith*, and to endeavour by all proper Means to *convert* those who do *err from it*, and to be *Zealous in both*; is without Dispute very *Good in its self*, and *well-pleasing to God*. But to *defend the Truth by Sedition, and Rebellion*; To *Depose*, and even *Murder Princes*, whom we think to be *Heretical*; and employ *Fire and Faggots*; *Galleys and Dungeons*; for the *Conversion, or Destruction* of their *Subjects*: To *break Faith, blow up Parliaments*, and commit the greatest *Villainies* under a pretence of *Zeal for Religion*; is a *Crime*, and a *Scandal*: Such a way of *defending and propagating Religion*, as nothing but a *factionous, unchristian, Spirit* could suggest; nor any thing but a *blind, and implicate Obedience*, engage Men to *Pursue*.

When our *Saviour* came to a certain *Village* of the *Samaritans*, and they refus'd to *receive him*, because his *Face look'd as if he were going up to Jerusalem*; Two of his *Disciples, James and John*, so heinously resented the affront, as to desire him to *Command fire to come down from Heaven*, and *consume them* for their *Refusal*. But he rebuked them, and said, *Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of*, Luke ix. 55. Their *Zeal* was *Good*, but the *Effect* of it was *Cruel*. The *Samaritans* offended in their *blind Malice* against our *Saviour*, because he was *going up to Jerusalem to Worship*: But those *warm Apostles* would have *sinned much more* in the way they would have taken to *punish their Offence*; and have mani-

manifested their *Zeal* to have been, tho' more *justifiable* in its *Cause*, yet no less *furious*, and *unreasonable*, in its *Operation*.

I might bring this *Observation* nearer home to *some things that have happen'd very lately among our selves*: But I shall forbear; and rather beseech God to give those who have had any Hand in them, a due Sense of their *own Errors*, than say any thing that may seem to reflect too hardly upon them. If our *Old, Inveterate Enemies*, the *Papists*, were not at the *bottom* of those *Disorders*, I am sure it was *their Work* that was all the while carrying on by them: And it must be a very *misguided Zeal* indeed for any one to think, that any *Interests*, but those of *Popery*, can be promoted by the *mutual Quarrels* of *Protestants* with *one another*.

And thus have I shewn you that a true *Zeal* for God may be *destitute* of *Knowledge*; and have withal pointed out to you by what *means* it may be so. I proceed,

II. To lay before you, the *fatal Consequences* of such a *mistaken Zeal*.

But alas! who can enumerate the half of those *Evils* which the Experience of all Ages has shewn to be the sad *result* of this *prolific Principle*; and which our own *Times*, and even our own *Country*, still continue to feel and lament. I must content my self to mention but a very few of those which were most notorious in the *Jews* heretofore, and may but too plainly be observed among *Christians* at this Day. And

And the *first* is, a bitter *Hatred*, and *Malice*, and *Uncharitableness*, towards all who *differ* from them; but especially in *Matters of Religion*. This was eminently the *Case of the Jews*, and gave birth to all those other *Evils* which I shall have Occasion to take Notice of, as the farther *Effects* of their *misguided Zeal*: And I need not tell you how the same *Spirit* continues to prevail among the like *furious* and *untutor'd Zealots* still. When once Men have espoused a Set of *favourite Notions*, and are persuaded that they are in the *right themselves*, and that *all others* should be of the *same Opinion*; when a *cunning Man*, or a *prevailing Party*, have so far *deluded* them, that they look upon the *Glory of God*, and the *Interests of Religion* to be concern'd in their *Errors*, and that all who differ from them are from thenceforth to be mark'd out as *Enemies* to both; 'tis an easy step from *Censuring* their *Brethren*, to draw them on to *hate* and *detest* them: And to teach them to account it an Evidence of their *Love to God*, to be *furious*, and *uncharitable*, towards their *Neighbour*.

Hence it is that even *Wise*, and *Good Men*, have been but too apt to bestow their *Anathema's* upon *one another*, without any *just cause*, and beyond any *reasonable measure*: As might easily be shewn, were I minded to repeat the *History* of such things as ought rather to be buried in a perpetual *Oblivion*. But alas! we need not look back to *past Ages* for that which our *own Experience* speaks too plainly to us. The *Sen-*
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tences,

tences, and Censures, of Papists against Protestants; The bitter, and unchristian Malice which they bear towards them; not to mention the Heats, and Animosities, which have sometimes risen among those of the Reformed Religion themselves, who have chanced to differ from one another; and that not in matters of Doctrine, but of Church-Government, and Discipline; for Rites and Ceremonies; may suffice to convince us how apt men are to consecrate their own Passions, and Prejudices, by the Name of Zeal; and then to account themselves at liberty to encourage the worst Resentments, when they have once gotten a shew of Religion to Sanctify, and (as they think) to justify, the utmost Excess of them.

Here therefore the Evils of this mistaken, and untutor'd Zeal, begin; but they do not stop here: But from prompting Men first to censure, and hate, those who are possibly both Wiser, and Better, than themselves; it carries them on,

Secondly, To downright Quarrelling with them: And then the result is, that it produces Schisms in the Church, and is too often the Cause of Tumults, and Divisions, in the State. So it was with the Jews both with respect to the Christians, and to one another: And thus it will always be likely to be with all others, who have the same blind Zeal that they had. For Zeal is an active, and a violent Principle: It raises the Passions; and for the most part carries this unhappy Disadvantage along with it, that it sets no bounds to them, but rather persuades men that they

they ought not to set any. That the more *fierce*, and *furious*, their *Zeal* is, the more *excellent* it ought to be esteemed by *themselves*, and the more *acceptable* it will render them to *God*. And when once Men are not only thus *mistaken* in their *Opinions* and *Practice*, but account it their *peculiar Glory* so to be; When they so far *Sanctify* their *Errors* as to think that all others ought to be *deceived* with them; and that not to *believe* as they *believe*, or *do* as they *do*, is a certain *mark* of *Reprobation*; and shews them to be *Enemies* of *God*, and *Perversers* of the *True Religion*; 'tis easy to conclude what *Disorders* will be likely to follow from such *Tempers*, and such *Mistakes*; and a daily Experience too plainly convinces us of it. The least that can be expected is, that they will *with-draw* themselves from those who *differ* from them; and, if they can do no more, at least will *Separate* from them, as not worthy of their *Communion*.

Thus it has been in all the *Schisms* which have arisen in the *Church*: And however we may suspect the *Heads* of them to have had some other *Motives* than a meer *mistaken Zeal* for *God* and their *Duty*; yet we cannot but think, I am sure we ought in Charity to hope, that there have been many among their *Followers*, who for want of better Instruction, have truly been deceiv'd by them; and, as *St. Paul* tells us of the *Jews* in the *Text*, have had a *Zeal* for *God*, tho' not according to *Knowledge*.

To say nothing of the *Contentions* of those *abroad*: What has been the result of this *Zeal* among *our selves*? Men at first began to *dislike some things*, they knew not why, in the *Establishment* of the *Reformation*; and their *distaste* increas'd even under *Persecution*, in their *Exile abroad*. They there began from a *difference in Opinion*, to *divide their Communion*: And when it pleas'd God to restore them again to the *free Exercise* of their *Religion* at home, they brought back their *Prejudices* along with them: Till at last their *Zeal* broke out into a formal *Schism*, and never left it till it destroy'd both *Church*, and *State*; and drew upon us that *Deluge* of *Evils*, which we still feel the sad Effects of at this Day.

This therefore is the next unhappy *Consequence* which naturally flows from a *misguided Zeal*; and where the *Erring Party* wants Power, this is the worst it can do: But if it chances to get Strength, it seldom stops here, but,

Thirdly, Instead of *breaking Communion* with their *Brethren*, it prompts Men more magisterially to *cast them off* from their *Communion* first; and then to *let loose their Rage* against them, as not fit to *live upon the Earth*. Thus did the *Jews persecute* our *Saviour*, and his *Disciples*: And thus, notwithstanding all the *Commands* of our *Blessed Master* to *Love our Brethren*, or if that be not enough, to *Love our very Enemies*; have *Christians* learnt to *Persecute one another*.

And

And here again I shall not need to recur to *former Ages*, for *Instances* to confirm the *Truth* of this *Remark*. The present Church of *Rome* is a *notorious*, as well as *scandalous*, *Proof* of it. She *cuts us off* from her *Communion*, and did she stop there we should not much complain of her. 'Tis a *Benefit* to be *deny'd Communion* by those, with whom we are persuaded it would be *damnable* for us to *communicate*. But her *Zeal* carries her much farther than this: She *damns* us in her *Sentences*; and that too does not much affect us. Let her *curse*, while *God blesses*: If her *Anathema's* do her *self* no *harm*, we are very sure they will do *us none*. And, to compleat all, she *excites* all who are of her *Faction*, (for I can scarce call it *Religion*) to *persecute*, and *destroy* us.

It is not unknown to almost any among us, how many wicked Devices the Heads of that *bloody*, and *idolatrous Church*, have found out to *execute* their *Vengeance* upon us. Where *Popish Princes* rule, 'tis determin'd to be a matter of such Conscience to *root out Protestants*, that if they neglect to do it, they shall not only be *damned* in the *other World*, but run the hazard of being *deposed*, and even *murder'd*, in *this*. If the *Prince* be himself *reformed*, or the number of his *reformed Subjects* too great to be easily destroy'd; then *Holy Wars* are to be rais'd against them; *Plots* and *Massacres* are to be contrived to devour them: Any thing to be done that may but help either to convert, or to consume them. This is the result of their *mistaken Zeal*: They maintain the

worst *Christianity*, by the most *unjustifiable means*; and are a sad instance both in the *one* and the *other*, how destitute a *true Zeal* (for such without question there is *in many of that Church*) may be of *Knowledge*; and to what a *degeneracy Christians* themselves may fall, both in their *Doctrine*, and in their *Practice*.

But O blessed Saviour! what a monstrous *Corruption*, what an utter *Perversion* is this, of thy most *holy, mild, and charitable Religion*? How has this *Zeal* destroyed at once both the *True Faith*, and *Spirit*, of the *Gospel*; and brought in the most gross *Superstitions*, and even *Idolatry* its self, into the *Church of Christ*? It is a *sad, an amazing Consideration*: A Matter of great *Humiliation*, as well as of *grievous Scandal*, to all who sincerely *Love God*, and *Honour his Truth*: And ought to convince us both that there may be a *Zeal for God that is not according to Knowledge*; and how careful we should all be, both in the *Examination* of the *Things* which we are *Zealous* for, and in our *Manner of shewing* our *Zeal* for them.

And now, I shall not need add much to convince you,

III. That notwithstanding any Pretence of a *Good Intention* for the *Glory of God*, yet if our *Zeal* be such as the *Jews* heretofore was, and as that of *some Christians* now is; without *Knowledge*, and contrary to *Charity*; it shall be imputed to us for *Sin* here, and

and as such, unless we *repent* of it, be *required* of us at the *Last Day*.

Men may mistake in *other Matters*, and yet be *innocent*. Their Error may be *involuntary*, perhaps *invincible*, and for that reason *excusable*. But that *Hatred*, and *Malice*, and *Uncharitableness*, are great *Sins*; That *Christians* ought not to be *factions*, and *contentious*; to injure their *Brethren*, and *disturb Communities*; That *Riots* and *Tumults*, *Sedition* and *Rebellion*, are very *wicked things*; and that no Pretence of the *Glory of God*, or *Zeal for Religion*, can make them *Lawful*; no such Persons can *innocently* be *ignorant*: And therefore, if any ones *Zeal* so far deludes him, as to make him *think*, or *do*, *otherwise*; 'tis a sure Sign that his *Zeal* its self is *criminal*; and like *Murder* committed by a *drunken Man*, will rather *aggravate*, than *lessen*, his *Offence*.

When Mens *Errors* are *involuntary*, and so guarded as not to have any *ill Influence* upon their *Practice*; They *mistake* the *Truth*, not for want of a *due Care* to *inform* themselves *aright*, but for want of *Capacity*, or *Opportunity*, of being *better instructed*; and in the mean time they neither *hate*, nor *condemn* any one for being of a *contrary Opinion*; If they be otherwise *good* and *charitable*, and to their *Zeal for God*, add a *Brotherly Love* towards their *Neighbour*; there ought to be great Allowances made for such *Errors*, which are plainly their *Misfortune*, not their *Fault*: And a very few *fundamental Articles*

cles of our Faith excepted, (in which all Christians generally do agree, and which are indeed so plainly revealed, that 'tis hardly possible for any one to be mistaken in them,) We ought not to doubt but that Men may quietly differ from one another, and from the Truth too, without any great danger to their Salvation. But if Men will not be content to be deceived themselves, but will oblige others to err with them; If their Zeal so far transports them as to engage them out of Conscience to God, to be uncharitable towards their Neighbours; to divide the Church, and to persecute its Members: They must not think it strange if the God of Love, and Peace, neither can approve, nor will allow of such Sins; tho' they should chance to be so far blinded by their Zeal, or rather Fury, as with those Jews in St. John, really to think they did God Service, and it was their Duty to do it.

St. Paul tells us what a bigotted Zeal he himself had for the Law of Moses before his Conversion: How he persecuted the Christians unto Death, binding and delivering into Prisons both Men and Women, Acts xxii. 3, 4. And this he did ignorantly, in Unbelief; out of a full Persuasion that it was his Duty so to do. But yet for all this, he confesses that he was herein a Blasphemer, and a Persecutor, and Injurious, and the chief of Sinners, 1 Tim. i. 13. And all the Service that his Ignorance, and Good Intention did him, was, That it disposed God to bring him to Repentance; without which his Zeal, innocent as
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he thought it, would have proved his *Ruin*, as he afterwards freely own'd it to have been *his Sin*. But *I obtained Mercy*, says he, *because I did it ignorantly thro' Unbelief*. And, *For this Cause I obtained Mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all Long suffering, for a Pattern for them which should hereafter believe on him to Life Everlasting*, &c. 13, 16.

The same was the Case of many of the other *Jews*, whose *Salvation* therefore our *Apostle* earnestly prays for in the Verse before the *Text*. But still he plainly intimates that their *Salvation* was to be the Effect of their *Repentance*: And that, like him, they must *lay aside* their *Blind Zeal*, and embrace the *Gospel*, or there could be no *hope of Pardon* for them.

O that Men would consider this more seriously than 'tis to be feared they do! That before they give the Reins to their *own Prejudices*, and *Passions*, under the Notion of *Zeal for God*, they would remember that such a Pretence, tho' it should be *real*, yet would not sanctify any *wicked*, or *irregular Actions*; and render them *innocent* in the *sight of God*. In short; That they would reflect, how that a *good Intention* is but *one Circumstance* of a *good Action*; which must be *perfect*, and *intire in all its Parts*, or notwithstanding any such *Good Intention*, it will be *Evil* in its self, and *imputed to Us for Sin*.

I have before observed what an *irregular Zeal* many of those of the Church of *Rome* have for their *Religion*. With what *Hatred* and *Malice*,
with

with what *Fury* and *Bitterness*, they pursue those who differ from them. How for the sake of it they *break their Faith*; *dissolve* all the Ties of *Friendship* and *Relation*; put off all *Bowels* of *Mercy* and *Compassion*; *depose*, and even *murder Princes*; erect *Inquisitions* first to *torture*, and then to *burn*, such as they are pleased to call *Hereticks*: And this they *all pretend*, and *some* without Controversy *truly do*, out of a *Zeal* for *God*, but not according to *Knowledge*. But shall a *misguided Zeal* therefore *excuse* such *Barbarities*? Shall *Malice*, and *Perjury*, and *Murder*, and *Rebellion*, and *Inhumanity* its self, be no Crimes, because some Men have so far given themselves up to a *Spirit of Delusion*, as to think they may *lawfully commit* them for *God's sake*? God forbid! Nay, rather we may fear that their *Guilt* will be found to be so much the *greater*, in that they have abused the *Sacred Name of God*, and his *Holy Religion*, to make them a Cover to such Proceedings. For by this Means there is not only a great *Liberty*, and even *Encouragement*, given to Mankind to commit the *worst of Villanies*, without *Remorse*; but the *Honour of God*, and the *Reputation* of the *Gospel*, are *Blasphemed* by those who are not *better instructed* to know how little, after all Mens Pretence to *Zeal* for them on these Occasions, they either *do allow*, or *will excuse*, such detestable Enormities.

Seeing then it appears that even a *true Zeal* may be separate from *Knowledge*; and, by reason thereof, instead of promoting the *Glory of God*,

God, the *Interests of Religion*, and *Mens own Salvation*, it may be *utterly repugnant* to all these, and end in *Shame and Damnation* at the last; it will certainly very much import us all,

First, To be the more careful that the *Cause* for which we are, at any time, *Zealous*, be *truly good*: That we be not either *mistaken our selves*, or *mised by others*, to be *earnest* in our Contentions for *such things* as are neither *justifiable* in *themselves*, nor will warrant our *Zeal* in the *Prosecution* of them.

It was St. *Paul's* Rule to the *Galatians*, in opposition to some *who did zealously affect them, but not well*, that it is good to be *zealously affected in a good thing*. And indeed when we shall consider how apt *mens Passions* are to *mislead* their *Reason*; and that *Zeal*, as I before observed, is both the *Effect* of an *ardent Love*, and is its self a *violent Desire* arising from thence, either of promoting the *Honour* of the *Person* whom *we love*, or of *removing* what may *hinder* our *Enjoyment* of him; so that it requires the *Concurrence* of *several Passions*, and those too *vehemently moved*, to the constitution of it: We may easily conceive how apt this *Affection* will be to *exceed* its *due bounds*, and to *transport* us *beyond what it ought to do*; and that, upon such *Occasions*, as do by no means become the *Prudence*, and *Piety*, of either a *wise Man*, or a *good Christian*.

Nor is this all our *Danger*, tho' this were enough to engage our utmost Care in this particular. There have always been, and will always be, many cunning and designing Men in the World, who make use of the *well meant Zeal* of others to help them to carry on their *own wicked Enterprizes*. Who like *Demetrius*, and his *Craft's-men*, being touch'd in their *own private Interests*, set whole *Cities*, and *Countries*, in an *Uproar* for their great *Diana*; whilst themselves smile at the *Delusion*, to see how under an innocent concern for *God*, and his Church, they help to promote their own *covetous*, or *malicious*, *Ends*. I shall not presume to bring this *Remark* too near home, to our *own Concern* in it: This I may say, that what Use has been made of *Mens Zeal* heretofore, may be made of it *again*; and for our *Credits sake*, if for nothing else, we should *beware* that it be not *our own Case*. But

Secondly, As to warrant our *Zeal*, we must be well assured that the *Cause* for which we are concern'd is *good*, so should we also take care that it be *worthy* the *Fervour* we shew for it.

To be *exceeding zealous* for *little Matters*; to *disturb* our *selves*, and *disquiet* others, for *such Things* as tho' perhaps they may be *good*, yet are of no *real Moment* to the great Concerns of Religion, is *Foolish* and *Imprudent*; and renders our *Zeal*, like that of the *Pharisees* in *tithing Mint*, *Annise*, and *Cummin*, vain and ridiculous. If we can *easily*, and *quietly*, *amend* the *least Matters* in which the *Honour of God*, and the

the *Interests of Religion*, are concern'd, let us be careful to do it: But otherwise, let us not put all things into *Confusion* for *little or no Cause*; nor *pull down* the *House*, merely because some of its *Rooms* are not *so well contrived*, as we could wish they were.

So long as we are in this World, there will be *Imperfections* in the *best Men*, and in the *best Constitutions*: And perhaps what we *disapprove*, others may have a *better Opinion* of. It is so in the Case between us, and those who, for *such kind of things*, *Dissent* from us. We think our *Doctrine* to be sound; (which even they allow) and our *Ceremonies* to be *decent*; our *Liturgy* *well composed*, and admirably suited to the *Ends* for which it was *framed*; and our *Government* *so Ancient*, as to be indeed *Apostolical*: And we have all the Reason in the World to believe that we are certainly *in the right* in *thus thinking* of them. But they have *some Exceptions* against every one of these; yet not *so great* but that they can many of them *occasionally*, (and I hope they do it with a *good Conscience*) *communicate* with us. And surely then notwithstanding any such supposed *Defects* in our *Constitution*, they should join in a *constant Communion* with us; at least should not shew such an *intemperate Zeal*, as some among them have done, against us, for what *themselves must allow* to be, at least, *tolerable Defects*.

As it is the part of a *good Man*, never to be *zealous* but in a *good Matter*; so is it no less the
part

part of a *wise Man* to *proportion* his *Zeal* to the *Subject* of it: And not to suffer his *Passions*, or *Prejudices*, to transport him so far beyond the *Bounds* of Reason, as to be *vehemently Zealous* for such things as do *not deserve*, and therefore cannot justify, an *immoderate Warmth* for them.

And as we should be thus careful in the *Things* we are *Zealous* for, to see that they be both *Good*, and *Weighty*; such for which we *innocently* may, and both *in Duty*, and *Prudence*, ought to be earnestly *concern'd*; so should we further take heed,

Thirdly, That our *Zeal* does not carry us to the use of any *Evil*, or *unlawful Means*, to attain the *End* at which we aim.

The neglect of this was one part of the *Jews* Fault heretofore; and it continues to be the great Crime of those of the *Church of Rome* at this Day: Whose *Religion*, were it as *Pure*, as we are sure it is *otherwise*; yet would it by no means excuse those *Unchristian Methods* they make use of for the *Propagation* of it.

A good Cause seldom needs to be supported by *wicked Means*: Or, if it should, yet a good Man would rather leave his Cause to *God's Providence*, and let it *suffer*, than venture to *Sin* against *God*, and his *own Soul*, for the sake of it. To do *Evil* that *Good* may come, was a *Maxim* with some in the *Apostles Times*: But *St. Paul* denounces no less than *Damnation* against those who should act by it;

it; and declares that their *Punishment*, how severe soever it might seem, would yet be *justly due to them* for such a *Procedure*.

And yet, Blessed Lord! How *common*, I had almost said, how *Catholic* an *Error* is this? And how easily do even *good Men* suffer themselves to be led away by it? Let the *Lies* and *Forgeries*, the *black Characters* and *envenom'd Malice*, which we have seen so freely raised *by some*, and so *readily* embraced by *others*; and that not out of *Zeal for God's Glory*, but, as it may justly be fear'd; for much *worser Ends*; be a *sad*, as it is a *plain, demonstrative, Proof* of this. I need not say what numbers of Men have been mis-led by these *unhallow'd Artifices* to *divide* us among our selves, and almost utterly to *overthrow* the very *Cause*, and *Constitution*, for which they would be thought to be so *zealously concern'd*. We have *seen*, we have *felt*; Oh! that we did not still too sensibly both *see*, and *feel*, the *unhappy Effects* of it! But sure then the best *Use* we can make of our *Experience* in this Particular, will be to *look well to our selves*; and to *caution all others*, to beware of such a *Zeal*, as is able to delude Men into the allowance of the *worst Means* to attain its Purposes: And to consider, that *Envy* and *Malice*, *Lying* and *Calumny*, *Clamour*, and *Sedition*; *Undutifulness* to *Superiors*, and *Uncharitableness* towards our *Brethren*, are very *great Sins*; and that (let the *Pretext* be what it will) those must be very *wicked Men*,

Men, who are guilty of them. Some may have a *Zeal of God* for ought I know, in what they do: but I am sure, if they have, 'tis not according to *Knowledge*. And it will be all one to a *Christian* at the *Great Day of Account*, whether he was *mis-led* by those who were really mistaken themselves; or by such as only practis'd upon his *Error*, or *Ignorance*; and made his *Zeal* Subservient to their *own private Ends*, and *Interests*.

Let this then be the *Conclusion* of all; that before we indulge our selves in any *immoderate warmth* for any thing, we take this *double, necessary Precaution*; never to engage in any *Cause* which we are not sure is *Good*, and *Just*; nor ever to *pursue* the *Interests* of it by any *Means*, but such as are consistent, both with our *Piety* to *God*; our *Duty* to our *Governors*; and our *Brotherly Love* and *Charity*, as well as *Justice*, towards our *Neighbour*.

This will render all our *Actions* *acceptable to God*, and *innocent*, if not always *pleasing*, to *Man*. And we shall then become indeed, like *John the Baptist*, *burning and shining Lights*, when, with him, we add *Knowledge* to our *Ar-dor*; and are as *eminent* for our *Innocency*, as we are *remarkable* for our *Zeal*.

God of his Infinite Mercy grant us a *Right Understanding in all Things*: That by *Truth* and *Peace*; by a *sound Faith*, and
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an extensive Charity; by an unfeigned Love of God, and an universal Obedience to all his Commandments; we may glorify his Holy Name, and promote both our own, and others Salvation; thro' Jesus Christ our Lord. To whom, &c.



Christian
of what we shall extend it to the Time of the
last, and is proper, Design of it.)
for their Country; (which I take to
the Jewish Church and Nation as
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Ow to we shall understand the Pro-



SERMON

S E R M O N IX.

Preached in the Parish Church of

St. *S E P U L C H R E*,

J U N E 9. 1715.

Being *Thursday* in *Whitsun-Week*.

A T T H E

Anniversary Meeting of the Children Educated in
the *Charity-Schools* in and about the Cities of
London and *Westminster*.

ISAIAH liv. 13.

*And all thy Children shall be taught of the
LORD, and great shall be the Peace
of thy Children.*

Owsoever we shall understand the *Pro-
phesy* of this Chapter; whether we
shall apply it to the *Restauration* of
the *Jewish Church* and *Nation* af-
ter their *Captivity*; (which I take to
have been the first, and most proper, Design of it;)
or whether we shall extend it to the *Time* of the
Christian

Christian Church, which should afterwards succeed in the room of the other; (and to which our *Saviour* has apply'd the very *Words* of the *Text* :) Thus much is plain, that the Prophet here foretels a glorious Change that should be made in the Circumstances of those of whom he speaks. That from a desolate, low, afflicted State; they should be restored to a peaceable, prosperous, and flourishing Condition. That their Borders should be enlarged; their Breaches be repaired; and their Tranquillity be established. That their Enemies should no more be suffered to prevail against them; nor to bring them under those Difficulties they had before sustained, and from which God here promises to deliver them: ^b *Sing, O Barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into Singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travel with Child; For more are the Children of the Desolate, than the Children of the married Wife, saith the Lord.* ^c *Enlarge the Place of thy Tent, and let them stretch forth the Curtains of thine Habitations; —* ^d *For thou shalt break forth on the Right Hand, and on the Left; and thy Seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate Cities to be inhabited.* ^e *For a small Moment have I forsaken thee, but with great Mercies will I gather thee.* ^f *In a little Wrath I hid my Face from thee, for a Moment; but with everlasting Kindness will I*

^a John vi. 45.

^b Isa. liv. 1.

^c y. 2.

^d y. 3.

^e y. 7.

^f y. 8.

have Mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer.

To secure these Blessings, and make his Church as pure in its Doctrine, and holy in its Conversation, as it is here promised to be prosperous in its outward Estate; among the many other Benefits which God encourages it to expect from him, that of my *Text* seems to be the most important; as being indeed the Foundation of all the rest: Namely, That under the Dispensation (whatever it be) which is here spoken of, *All their Children should be taught of the Lord*; that is to say, should be instructed by faithful, wise, and good Men; in the Knowledge, and Worship of God, and in the Nature of that Obedience which he required of them. That to improve this Teaching, and render it truly operative upon their Minds and Actions, God would add his Blessing to their Labours; and by the *Grace* of his *Holy Spirit*, give Force and Energy to their Instructions: So our *Saviour* warrants us to interpret this Promise, St. *John* vi. 44, 45. The Result of which should be the happy Enjoyment of all the Blessings, Spiritual and Temporal, spoken of in this Prophecy; and summarily comprehended in the other Part of the Words which I have read to you, *And great shall be the Peace of thy Children.*

These are the Two *Promises* pointed out to us in the *Text*: And being apply'd to the occasion of our present assembling, will afford us the Two following *Observations*, the Subject of our present Discourse:

I. Of

I. Of the great *Benefit* of a *Religious Instruction* to any People: *All thy Children shall be taught of the LORD.*

II. Of the *Blessing* which that *Church*, and *People*, may hope to receive of God, in which such an *Instruction* is generally encouraged, and improved: *Great shall be the Peace of thy Children.*

I begin with the *former* of these, to consider,

I. The *Benefit* of a *Religious Instruction* to any People: *All thy Children shall be taught of the LORD.*

That this Promise was effectually made good to the *Jews*, after their Return from their Captivity, the Accounts we have of their Establishment, both from *Ezra*, and *Nehemiah*, will not suffer us to doubt. God raised up a Sett of excellent Men, to instruct them in their Duty; to reform the Abuses that were crept in amongst them; to restore his Worship to its ancient Purity; and utterly to root out all Idolatry from the midst of them. And what the Effect of this was, we read in the viiith, xth, and xiiith Chapters of *Nehem.* *The People, the Priests, and the Levites; their Wives, their Sons, and their Daughters; every one having Knowledge and Understanding; clave to their Brethren, and enter'd into a Curse, and into an Oath, to walk in God's Law, which was*

given by Moses the Servant of God; and to observe and do all the Commandments of the LORD, and his Judgments, and his Statutes 8.

This was the Result of their *good Instruction*: God co-operated with the Instruments he had raised up to teach his People. He opened their Hearts to receive what they had taught them: And both of these together had such an Influence upon them, that they not only set all things in the best Order for the present; but so rooted the Knowledge and Service of God, in the Minds of their Posterity, that no Trials or Persecutions could ever afterwards draw them away from it; or engage them in any of those idolatrous Practices for which they had so justly, but severely, suffered before.

What the Consequence was of that more perfect Accomplishment which it pleased God to make of this *Prophecy* afterwards, by the Publication of his *Gospel*, I shall not need to say ^h. The miserable Estate in which all Mankind, both *Jews* & *Gentiles*, lay, at the time of our *Saviour's* appearing; the Ignorance, and Corruption, which had then overspread the Face of the whole Earth; as it abundantly shews the Want of some such supernatural Assistance to remove both: So the Event of *God's teaching them*; not now by holy Men raised up by him for that Purpose, but by his own Son ⁱ; no less evidently proves the Benefit of it. Instead of that Blindness under which the

8 Nehem. viii. 28, 29.

^h Rom. i, ii, &c.

ⁱ Heb. i. 1.

Generality of the World before laboured; there presently brake forth the most perfect Knowledge both of the Nature, and Worship of God, and of that *Holiness without which no Man shall ever see the Lord^k*: And, in a little time, Men became as reformed in their Manners, as they were illuminated in their Understandings. Superstition, and Idolatry, began every where to decay; and give Place to the Service of the only true and living God. Justice and Piety, Meekness and Humility, Mercy and Charity; all the most lovely Graces and Ornaments of a Christian Life, appeared in the Manners and Conversation of those who embraced the Gospel. By these they both surprized, and silenced their Enemies: Whilst by the Influence which their *good Instruction* had upon them, they shew'd to what Heights it is possible for those, who are truly *taught of God*, (enlightned by his Word, and sanctified by his Holy Spirit) to attain in the Practice of Piety; and how great the Benefit of such an Instruction ought to be esteemed by all of us.

Give me leave, for the farther Illustration of this Remark, to add yet one Instance more; which, I think, should never be forgotten by us. When, in Process of Time, even this great Blessing of the *Gospel-Revelation* began to lose very much of its Influence upon Mens Minds; and the Corruption of its Truths brought in a sad Degeneracy of Morals into the Church; and, for the Punishment of

^k Heb. xii. 14.

both, God permitted the barbarous Nations to break in upon his Vineyard on every side; and a general Ignorance and Superstition to overspread the Face of *Christendom*: How did it please God, by the Means of a better *Instruction*, to bring on a glorious *Reformation* of those Errors, and Abuses, which had so fatally corrupted, and almost utterly subverted, the Truth of the *Gospel*? As Learning revived, and Men began more rightly to understand the Doctrine of Christ, so did they proportionably improve both in their own Manners, and in the true Worship of God. Instead of that *Form of Godliness* with which they had, in a great Measure, contented themselves before; and those *outward Observations* in which they had been wont to place almost the Sum of their Religion; they now began to contend in good earnest after the *inward Power*, and Purity of it. *Pardons* and *Indulgences*, *Masses* and *Prayers for the Dead*, were changed into true Repentance, and Reconciliation of Sinners yet living, through Faith in *Jesus Christ*. *Men delayed not till Death to be justified*; nor hoped to attain that Salvation in the other World, after which they had never laboured to any purpose in this. In short; As the Truth of the Gospel became better understood, so did the Practice of Piety improve together with it. Men began once more to live as became those who were rightly instructed in the Way of Godliness; and by their Actions shew'd both the Purity, and Power, of their Principles; and how much a sound Knowledge of the Doctrine of
Christi-

Christianity, is apt to conduce to a *Conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ*¹.

Nor ought it to be any Exception against the Truth of this Remark, that neither all Christians in general, nor we of the Reformed Religion in particular, seem to shew any such great Influence that our Knowledge has upon our Lives and Actions; or that we are at all better, in this respect, than those who do not enjoy the like Benefit of being *taught of God*. For besides that this, I hope, is not altogether true, in Fact; but that, as bad as we generally are, we may yet venture to appeal even to the Practice of many among us, to shew the Efficacy of a *Religious Education*, to the Improvement of a *virtuous and holy Conversation*: Let me, in answer to this Pre-
tence, observe,

(1st.) That perhaps this very *Decay of Piety*, which is *objected* against the *Benefit* of such an *Instruction*, may be, and I believe has been, in a good Measure, owing to the *Want* of it: And will therefore be so far from affording any Argument against the Usefulness of a Religious Education, that, on the contrary, it will serve more plainly to prove the Advantage of it.

It is but too well known, what a sad Neglect of *good Instruction* did for many Years prevail among us. How little Care was taken not only by those of the meanest Degree, (tho' by them more especially,) but by too many of a higher Rank, of

¹ Philip. i. 27.

the Education of their Children. How instead of being *taught of God*; bred up to the Knowledge of their Duty to him, and in a conscientious Regard to the Practice of it; they were either altogether uninstructed in the Principles of Religion; or rather, were encouraged by the ill Examples of those with whom they conversed, to despise both the Knowledge, and Service of God; and to do those things which were destructive to their Salvation. But sure I am, whosoever shall consider how strangely our Youth was neglected in this Particular; what little Regard both Parents, and Masters of Families, were wont to have of their Children, and Servants, as to their Knowledge of their Duty to God, and their constant fulfilling of it; may justly fear, that the Complaint which God heretofore made against the *Jews*, might but too justly have been apply'd to our selves; *Hos. iv. 6. My People are destroy'd for lack of Knowledge*: And that the Increase of Wickedness, about that time more especially, among us, cannot be more reasonably ascrib'd to any other Cause, than to the *Want* of that *Religious Instruction*, and *Education*, which would at once both have better taught them what their Duty was, and have more effectually disposed them to the Practice of it.

Nay but (2^{dly}.) What if instead of being *taught of God*, it has been our Misfortune to have had our Children rather *taught of the Devil*; bred up, not according to the Truth or Piety of the Gospel; but with such Principles, and in such Courses,

as

as naturally tend to the overthrowing of both. This, I fear, has been too much our Case: And then what Wonder, if, instead of a right Knowledge of God, and his Religion, and a Practice agreeable thereunto; we have seen such Notions prevail, and such Wickedness committed, as could hardly have been imagined in a Christian Country.

To say nothing of those *Heretical Opinions* in Matters of Faith, which have been but too successfully propagated among us, to the Destruction of some of the most *Fundamental Articles* of it: What bold Attacks have there been made upon the whole *Gospel-Revelation*? And how have we been forced to maintain the very *Truth of our Religion*, against the open Assaults of profane Disputers against it?

What Pains, and Care, have there been employ'd, to persuade Men by Principle to become *Infidels*? And to resolve all Religion into meer *Deism*, as the only rational System for a Man of Parts to rest upon?

And for the other Way of being *taught of God*, viz. by the *Grace*, and *Illumination*, of the *Holy Spirit*; what has been more exposed as vain, and ridiculous, I had almost said, and even fanatical, than to believe that any such Assistance was either needed by Men, or to be obtained of God?

How far we are to thank our old, inveterate Enemies, the *Papists*, for this deplorable Corruption both of Principles, and Morals, which,
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but a few Years since, too much prevailed among us; can be doubted by no one who considers, what Countenance it received, and what Encouragement it met with, from some of the highest Rank, and most dangerous Example: Who, after having spent their whole Lives in the most detestable Hypocrisy, were at last discovered to have been all the while the secret Friends of, if not Managers for, that Party, in Opposition to the true Religion, and Worship of God, so wonderfully restored, and again establish'd among us. And sure then it ought not to be any Prejudice to the Benefit of that *good Instruction*, and *pious Education*, in the true Doctrine of Christ, of which I am now speaking; that by the secret Artifice of Men, perhaps of *no Religion at all*; of *Deists*, *Socinians*, *Papists*, and the like *Hereticks*; too many among us have been drawn aside from the Truth of the Gospel, and lived unworthily of that holy Name by which they were called.

But, (3^{dly}.) and to come yet more directly up to the Point in Hand: It is not pretended that the *best Instruction* in the World will always attain its End; nor ought it therefore to be any *Exception* against the *Benefit* of such an *Instruction*, if it sometimes chances to miss of it.

God has given to Mankind a *Freedom of Will*, and he deals with us upon the Supposition of it. He has endued us with *Reason* to discern between *Good* and *Evil*: He has imprinted upon our Minds the *natural Notions* of both; and by the *Revelation* of the *Gospel*, has yet more fully instructed

instructed us in the Knowledge of our Duty. There he has shewn us what is fit, and right; and what he requires us both to believe and do, in order to our Salvation. And the more to dispose us to believe, and do accordingly, he has therein farther revealed to us a clear Account of our future State; what he has prepared for us in the other World, according as we shall be careful, or not, to live so as he requires of us in this.

To assist us in our Duty, and encourage us to set our selves the more vigorously to the Practice of it; he has not only promised us the Forgiveness of our Sins through the Merits of his Son; whom he for that End chiefly *sent into the World*, that *he might make a Propitiation for them*; but has moreover provided a Remedy for the Weakness, and Corruption, of our Nature; and to enable us so to repent, and live, that we may be saved. He has given us his Holy Spirit, to sanctify our Hearts; to illuminate our Understandings; to strengthen us against Temptation; and both to dispose, and assist us, to fulfil whatsoever he has thought fit to require of us in order to our Salvation.

But still *God forces no Man's Will*: He constrains no one either to believe in, or to serve him, whether he will or no. He has done all that was needful either to justify himself, or to save us. He has shewn us what our Duty is; he

John iv. 19. *God has*

has set before us the strongest Motives, that it was possible to offer rational Creatures, to engage us to pursue it; and he has promised us the greatest Assistances to enable us so to do. And it cannot be doubted but that it must be of the utmost Advantage to any one to be thoroughly instructed in, and convinced of, all this. To be possess'd with a hearty Sense of the Goodness and Mercy of God; of the Love and Satisfaction of Christ; of the great and unconceivable Happiness of Living well; and of the extreme Peril of doing otherwise. But if, after all, Men will be brutish and wicked; if they either will not consider their Duty and their Interest, or will resolve to perish in opposition to both; they have their Liberty; they may do as they please. Nor will this prove any thing more, than that such Persons will have acted as unreasonably, as they have done wickedly: And must expect to suffer by so much the greater Damnation, by how much the more they have rejected the best Means, and most endearing, as well as most powerful Motives, and Assistances, to bring them to Salvation.

The Sum then of this whole Matter is this: That to be *taught of God*; to be instructed in the true Knowledge and Service of God, and of the great Obligations which lie upon us to worship and obey him as we ought to do; is one of the highest Privileges and Advantages, that any one can be intitled to, or be blessed with, in this World. It is the best, and most likely Means, to bring us to a Life of Holiness here; and, in Consequence

sequence thereof, to eternal Happiness hereafter. And when to this natural Tendency of our being *taught of God*, we shall add what is farther comprehended in the spiritual Meaning of that Expression; and does, by the Blessing of God, generally accompany this *Instruction* under the *Gospel Dispensation*; namely, that we are hereby assured of the *Grace* of the *Holy Spirit*; to enlighten us in the Knowledge, to confirm us in the Belief, and to assist us in the Performance of what we are taught; so that it must be our own Fault if we do not, every one of us, attain to the End of our *Instruction*, the Salvation of our Souls, by it: I will venture to conclude, which was *my first Observation*, That howsoever some may, in despite of these Assistances, miscarry at the last; yet this will not hinder but that the *Advantage* of a *Religious Education*, ought nevertheless to be accounted a very *singular Blessing to any People*; and to be proportionably esteemed, and encouraged, by them.

How far this may be affirmed to be our own Case in particular; if in such an Assembly as this, where we have before our Eyes such a numerous Appearance of our *Children* thus *taught of God*, it can be doubted of; I shall enquire hereafter. In the mean time, having now, I hope sufficiently established my *former Observation*, of the great *Benefit of a good, and pious Education*, (the most proper Subject, as well as the most seasonable Improvement of our present Assembling) I proceed more briefly to consider;

II. What

II. What our *Text* encourages us to expect, as the Consequence of such an Instruction; namely, the *Blessing* of that *Church*, and *People*, in which it is duly cultivated, and improved: *Great shall be the Peace of thy Children.*

And here, if we shall, in the first Place, apply this Promise to the *Persons themselves* who are so *taught of God*, as I have before shewn; that is to say, instructed in the Knowledge of the true Religion, and bred up to the Practice of a holy Life; it cannot be doubted, but that *great* indeed *must be the Peace of such Persons*: Who trusting in God, and being acquitted by their own Consciences, and justify'd by the ° *Holy Spirit*, bearing Witness with their Spirits, that they are the *Children of God*, and *Heirs of his Promises*; must needs enjoy such an inward Comfort, and Peace, in their own Breasts, as passes all Understanding; and may suffice to render all outward Estates tolerable, and even easy, to them. This, as it is the peculiar Blessing, and Privilege, of such Persons; so does it abundantly make good the Promise of the *Text*, in its utmost Import, to them: And should engage us all both to desire and endeavour to be thus *taught of God*, that so we may attain that blessed Peace of Mind, and Conscience, which will evermore be the Result of it.

° Rom. viii. 16, 17.

But I may venture to carry this *Promise* yet farther, and to affirm, that such a *Religious Instruction*, besides this *Advantage*, which it can hardly fail to bring to those who enjoy the *Benefit* of it, will moreover be very likely to promote the *publick Peace*, and *Happiness*, of that *Church*, and *Country*, in which it is generally countenanced and encouraged: And that it should therefore be the *Wisdom*, as it is certainly the *Duty*, of all Christian Princes and States, to procure such an *Instruction* of all their People.

This, I am sure, must have been the *Opinion* of those *Enemies* of Religion, who would persuade us, that the whole *Foundation* of it is to be ascribed to the *Cunning* and *Policy* of those, who first undertook to unite Men into the *Bands* of *Civil Society*; and thought it necessary, for the better *Accomplishment* of this *End*, to propagate a *Belief* of *God*, and the *Fear* of his *Judgments*, among the *People*: And is confirmed to us by the *Authority* of *Solomon*, one of the wisest Princes that ever sat upon any *Throne*, *Prov. xiv. 34.* that *Righteousness exalteth a Nation*; but *Sin is the Reproach of any People*. And whosoever shall consider, either the *Natural Tendency* of *Religious Instruction*, to promote the *Ends* of *publick Peace* and *Prosperity*; or the *Dispensations* of the *Divine Providence* towards such *States* and *Countries*, as have been the most careful to keep up the *Knowledge* and *Worship* of *God*, and a general *Practice* of *Virtue* and *Piety* amongst them; will find, that nothing could have
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been

been either more justly observed by the one; or (had that been the Case) have been more wisely contrived, and invented, by the other.

If, *First*, we consider what is the *Natural Tendency* of such an *Instruction*, with regard to the *publick Welfare of any People*; it cannot be doubted, but that as hereby Mens Knowledge will be encreas'd, their Passions subdu'd, their irregular Appetites and Inclinations, be corrected and restrain'd, and their good Dispositions cultivated and improved; so must they needs, upon all these Accounts, be render'd thereby more *fit* for *Civil Society*; and more likely to live, and act, after such a manner as is requisite to promote the Happiness of it.

Such an Institution and Education, will not only cultivate Mens Minds, and regulate their Manners; but will moreover be apt to enlarge their Views, and implant a generous Spirit within them. It will prompt them to look beyond their own private Ease or Interest; and convince them of the Justice, the Goodness, the Expediency, and even Necessity, of considering and promoting other Mens Happiness as well as their own. It will shew them the Reasonableness of living as becomes the Members of the same Civil Society: Will make them dutiful and obedient to their Superiors; just and upright towards their Equals; loving and charitable, pitiful and compassionate, towards all Men; but especially such as shall either need, or desire, their Assistance. This will at once both dispose Men to honest Labour

bour and Industry, and enable them to employ themselves in some useful way, to their own, and the publick, Welfare. And when to all this we shall add, that by such an early and good Instruction, Men will be taught upon sound Principles to believe, that their Duty to God requires them so to act, as both their own Interest, and the Dictates of natural Reason, thus improved, would of themselves have engaged them to do : Either it must be said that the careful, and regular, Exercise and Observation of these, and the like Social Virtues, does not tend to promote the Peace, and Well-Government, of any People; or (because that cannot be deny'd) it must be granted, that where such a *good Instruction*, and *Education*, is generally encouraged, and provided for, in any State or Country, it will be likely to have such a happy Effect, as I am now speaking of, to procure and establish the publick Safety and Welfare of it.

And for what concerns the *Providence of God* towards such a People; if we may be permitted, either from the *Experience of what has been the usual Method of that*, in all Places, to conclude what we may reasonably hope shall continue to be the Effect of it; or may be allow'd to argue upon such Principles, as at once both seem to give the best Account of the *Divine Dispensations towards Civil Societies*, and are pointed out to us by God himself, in the Holy Scriptures, as the stated Rules, and Measures, of his Procedure with regard to them: They will furnish

us with abundant Reasons to believe, that nothing can be more likely to secure the Favour of God to any People, than a general Encouragement of the Religious Institution, and Education of all its Children, will be likely to do.

For let us enquire now of the Ages that have been before us, and let us ask from one End of the Earth even to the other; when did God ever give up any People to Ruine and Desolation, till their Sins and Impieties had provoked him so to do? Or what Accounts do the sacred Writings furnish us with of his Judgments, whether against the *Jews*, his own peculiar Inheritance; or against the *Heathen* Nations round about them, but only this, that they had *fill'd up the Measure of their Iniquities*; and were therefore appointed by him to Destruction, because their Wickedness had made them ripe for it.

Private Persons may live well, and yet fall under very grievous Trials, when the Wisdom, or even Goodness of God, shall make him think it expedient for them to be exercis'd by them: Because there is a Time coming, in which they shall be abundantly rewarded for all their Sufferings. And, for the same Reason, they may also do wickedly; and yet, if God sees fit, continue to prosper in their Ways; because they shall be call'd to account for it in the other World, and there receive the full Punishment of their Evil Doings. But this is not the Case with publick Societies: These will all be dissolv'd with this present World, and have no Continuance in the other. And therefore

fore we may the rather conclude, That the Rewards of publick Virtue and Piety; and the Punishments of open Profaneness, Idolatry, and Impiety, generally practis'd in any Nation; and if not allow'd, yet not suppress'd as it ought to be; shall be dispens'd now, in this present Time: As God plainly declar'd to the *Jews* that they should be; and as the Histories, both of that People, and of all other States and Countries, assure us they, commonly, have been.

If therefore the Care of instructing Persons aright, but especially of breeding up our Children in an early Knowledge, and Sense of their Duty, and to a constant Discharge of it; will be the most likely Way to promote the Service of God, and the Practice of true Religion, and Piety, in any Nation; (as it cannot be doubted but that it will :) We may then, upon all these Accounts, have good Reason to conclude, (which was my *Second Observation*) That it will also thereby contribute to the *publick Peace, and Prosperity, of every such People*; and that where the one is carefully done, the other will generally be found to be the Effect of it.

And here then let us stop, and enquire, what our *own Condition* is with respect to the *former of these*; that so we may be able the better to judge what we have to *hope for* as to the *latter*.

And indeed I think I may venture to say, that if ever any People might justly flatter themselves, that *All their Children were taught of the*
S 3 LORD;

LORD; we of this *Church* and *Nation* may, upon the surest Grounds, presume so to do.

To pass by the many other Instances of the Improvements which have been made, within these few Years last past, of Religious Instruction, and the Service of God, among us: Our frequent *Communions*; our publick *Invitations* to them, and *Preparations* for them; our *Daily Prayers*; our constant *Catechizings*; And all these carefully attended upon by the greatest Number of pious, and well-disposed Christians, that perhaps has ever been known in any Age:

To say nothing of that, which nevertheless can never be mention'd without the utmost Comfort and Satisfaction; I mean the *publick Provision* which has been made for the *better Support of the establish'd Ministry at Home*; and for *Planting of Churches and Ministers*, where, till now, never any where sent, or settled, Abroad: And both these for the same End, of a more perfect Instruction of the People in their Duty to God; and the better to assist them in the Performance of it:

To omit, *Lastly*, the mention of those *voluntary Societies*, which have been form'd for the very Purpose of what I am now speaking, *viz.* for the *Propagating of Christian Knowledge*; and for the Improvement of that Knowledge by the *Reformation of Manners*, and the careful *Suppression of all open Vice and Immorality*; And these also both approv'd of, and countenanc'd by, publick Authority:

Who

Who can behold this present Assembly, and see here so many Thousands of poor Children, *All taught of God*; instructed upon Charity, the Gift and Work of God; and bred up to the Knowledge, and Service of God, through Jesus Christ; and then consider what Multitudes of other poor Children are instructed upon the like Charity, in the same Principles of Truth and Piety, in all the other Parts of this Kingdom; and not be forc'd to confess that we are, in this respect, certainly, *a wise and understanding People*: And that never any Nation, either had the LORD their God better known, or his Commandments more carefully inculcated upon the Minds and Hearts of all its Children, than our Nation has at this Day.

But I must not stop here: Our Children are not only thus early, and carefully, *instructed* in their Duty; but that they may be also *taught of God*, in the other, and more spiritual, Meaning of that Expression; they are train'd up in the *Practice* of that *Piety* in which they are *instructed*; and are at once both inform'd what they ought to do, and accusom'd to the doing of it.

How great the Benefit of such an early *Habit of Virtue and Piety*, settled and rooted in them, may be likely to prove to them in all the following Course of their Lives, I shall not need to say. Every one knows how much easier it is to prevent evil Habits, than to break them: And if any thing in the World can make Men firmly

Good, this must be the way : We must ^P *train up our Youth in the Course they ought to take*, and then we may hope *that when they are Old, they will not depart from it.*

Nor is it any small Benefit to the Security of our Children in the Good way, in which they have been instructed, and accustomed, to walk ; that they are moreover bred up to *Labour* and *Industry* ; are used to be honestly and diligently employ'd ; and are thereby freed from those Temptations which *Idleness* alone, without any other Incentive, is but too apt to minister to most Men.

By this they are deliver'd from another Danger, and a yet stronger Temptation to Sin, that of *Want, and Laziness* : Whilst being accustomed to a Life of Labour and Diligence, they have neither Leisure to contrive, nor Opportunity to execute, nor Occasion to recur to, any wicked and unlawful Means of providing for their Necessities ; which their constant Industry in that good, and honest Way, in which they are brought up, sufficiently prevents.

Thus are these *poor Children*, in every respect, *taught of the LORD* : For we cannot doubt but that where such good Care is taken of their outward Instruction, and Conduct ; God will never be wanting to make it perfect, by the inward Sanctification, and Grace, of his *Holy Spirit*. It would be needless for me to observe how our

other Children, of a better Rank and Quality, are provided for, in this respect. The Multitude of our *Publick Schools*, many of them plentifully endow'd for this very Purpose, in all the Parts of this Realm: The Number, and Greatness, of our *Colleges* in our Two famous *Universities*; such as no other Nation in the World can boast of: And that unusual concern which the Example of these Poor Childrens Education has rais'd in those of better Abilities for the good Instruction of their own, beyond what was ever known in former Times, sufficiently speak it to us. But from both together, we may, I think have good grounds to hope, that as no People ever took more, or better Care, to have *All their Children taught of God*; so we shall also, in due time, reap the consequent *Blessing* of it, mentioned in the *Text*; and that *Great shall be the Peace of our Children*.

And indeed he must have been a very careless Observer of the *Providential Dispensations of God towards this Church, and Nation*, since the Time that this Improvement of Religious Instruction began to be revived among us; who has not already remarked somewhat very extraordinary in them; which cannot be imputed to any thing more properly, than to the Blessing of God upon this Great Work.

Scarce was the ^a Foundation of this Discipline laid in the Neighbouring City; but our *Fears* of

^a By the late Archbishop of Canterbury, in his Two Schools at St. Martin's and St. James's Westminster.

Popery, and of that *Ruine* of our *Laws* and *Liberties*, as well as our *Religion*, with which we were at that time eminently threatned, began to be wonderfully allay'd, by a *Revolution* which I may truly say was almost intirely owing to our Peoples being *taught of the LORD*. Every one knows how much the Zeal, and Diligence, of our *Clergy* in those Days, by *Writing, Preaching, and Disputing*, against the *Tyranny, Superstition, and Idolatry* of the *Church of Rome*, contributed to the settling of the Nation in a true Knowledge, and just Esteem, of their *Reformed Religion and Worship*; and to raise that *Noble Spirit* which in those days of Danger shewed its self in all Orders of Men among us; and made them resolve not to part with their *Religion, or Liberties*, but with their *Lives*. We saw the whole Kingdom stand up, as one Man, in Defence of Both: And the result was, that God sent us such a Deliverance at Home, and supported us with such an Alliance Abroad, as equally both astonish'd our Enemies, and surpriz'd our own selves. It was with us then, as it had been with the *Jews* heretofore: *When God turned the Captivity of Sion, they were like to Men that Dream*^{*}; and so were we. We were say'd, before we could believe that we were in Safety. We were delivered from the utmost Danger; and it was in such a wonderful manner, that we could scarce think that we were so.

* Psal. cxxvi. 1.

How it has pleased God to bless and preserve us, since that Time, (the very *Period* from which we must compute the Revival of this *good Instruction*, too fatally, alas! neglected before :) In how many Dangers, and from how many Devices, he has delivered us; it would be too long for me particularly to observe. To sum up all in one Word: God has saved our *Religion*, our *Laws*, our *Liberties*, our *Property*, nay, and our very *Lives*, when they were all of them in the utmost Peril. He has establish'd us upon that Bottom which our *Glorious Deliverer King William*, and our late *Royal Sovereign Queen Anne*, justly look'd upon as our *only Security*, against the like Dangers for the Time to come. He has brought that *Great and Necessary Settlement* to bear: And placed a *Royal Family* upon the Throne, under which we have all the Reason in the World to promise our selves a lasting Peace, and Establishment. And though we have still our *Ammonites*, and *Arabians* without, and their Confederates within, conspiring together, and labouring incessantly against our Peace; as those Enemies of the *Jews*, pursuant to the *Prophecy* before us, did against theirs; yet we may justly hope that, by the Blessing of God, they shall meet with the same Disappointment in the End: *Behold they shall gather together, but not of me; whosoever shall gather together against thee shall fall for thy sake. No Weapon*

* Nehem. iv. 7. Comp. with Chap. vi. 17, 18.

† Isa. liv. 15.

that is formed against thee shall prosper: " And every Tongue that shall rise against thee in Judgment, shalt thou condemn.

Permit me only, for the better Improvement of what hath been said; and that we may ascertain this Blessing of God to our selves, and our Posterity, to offer you a Reflexion or two, with particular regard to *the Design of our present Assembling*, and I shall have done.

And, 1st, We may from hence see, how much it will concern us to use our utmost Endeavours to *encourage this Charity*; and if it were possible to bring it to such a Perfection that there might not be one un-tutor'd Person remaining in our Land: And to *transmit it to those who shall come after us*, as the best Preservative of the publick Peace and Tranquillity; the surest Earnest of God's Favour and Protection, to our Church and Country, in all succeeding Generations.

I shall not here trouble you with any Repetition of what I have before said, to shew either the *Natural Tendency* of such a *Religious Education of all our Children, to the Prosperity of our Country*; or the just Reason we may have to promise our selves the *peculiar Blessing and Favour of God from it*. But surely that *Charity* which so directly tends, to the private Welfare and Happiness of those who partake of it; and is, at the same time, so fruitful of publick Blessings also; and promises such a plentiful return of

▪ Isa. liv. 17.

Peace and Unity, of Religion and Piety, of all those Virtues and Qualifications which may be likely to render any People either Quiet and Prosperous at Home, or Formidable Abroad; I say, such a *Charity*, as it must needs deserve, so, one would hope, it should not fail to meet with a very particular Encouragement from all good Men; and to be carried on with a Zeal in some Measure suitable both to those Benefits we have already received, and to those farther Blessings we have all imaginable Reason to believe will continue to follow both to our selves, and our Posterity, from it.

And Blessed be God! who hath put it into your Hearts to promote this Charity in such a Manner as is beyond the Example of any other Country, and was never known, till these latter Days, in our own. May your Care and Diligence in this good Work abound more and more! And what *David* heretofore begg'd of God, as the peculiar Blessing of his Reign, be fully accomplish'd in that of our most gracious Sovereign, Psal. cxliv. 12. *That our Sons may be as Plants grown up in their Youth; our Daughters as Corner Stones polished after the Similitude of a Palace.* *Y.* 13. *Our Garners full, affording all manner of Store; our Sheep bring forth Thousands, and Ten Thousands in our Streets.* *Y.* 14. *That our Oxen may be strong to labour; that there be no breaking in, no going out, nor any complaining in our Streets.* *Y.* 15. *Happy the People*

ple that is in such a Case! Happy that People whose God is the LORD! But,

2^{dly}, That this *Charity* may be as *wisely managed* to the obtaining of these Blessings, as it is justly to be hoped it shall continue to be highly *encouraged* by all of us, in order thereunto; it should be the special Care of all those who are concern'd in the *Direction* of any of these *Schools*, to see that our *poor Children* be duly *bred up* in them, to *answer the Ends of their Institution*.

Now those I take to be especially these Three: *Christian Knowledge*; a *Religious Practice*; and an *Useful Industry*. By the *First* of which, a good Foundation will be laid of Virtue and Piety in their Minds: By the *Second*, they will attain to the habitual Discharge of it: And by the *Third*, will be secured against the Dangers and Temptations which always attend an idle Course of Life; and, if not prevented, will be likely to render the best Education vain and of no Effect.

Here therefore, as I trust there is, so I think there should be, the utmost Care taken, to see that these poor Children be put into the Hands of Masters and Mistresses, duly qualified to promote these Purposes. That they be Persons capable of instructing them in all these Ways: And such as by their good Examples, no less than by their careful Attendance upon the Charge committed to them, will both inform them aright
how

how they ought to walk; and see that they do frame their Lives and Manners agreeably thereunto.

To both which, let me add, *Thirdly*, and *Lastly*; That in the Management of this *Charity*, all *Party*, and *Faction*; and whatsoever else may tend to make any *Distinction*, or *Division*, either among the *Directors* of it, or *Contributors* to it, be utterly laid aside: As that which, if once it be admitted, will tend to the Ruine of this *Work*, and *Labour of Love*; which nothing but *Love*, and *Peace*, and *Unity*, and *Charity*, can effectually promote, and establish.

It is a Misfortune never to be sufficiently lamented by all who wish well either to the Glory of God, or the Peace of their Country, or the Interests of the Church by Law establish'd, (which, as it the best deserves, so I hope it shall always continue to be the most carefully supported by all of us;) that there should be any such thing as *Party*, or *Division*, among us. That a *Church* so wisely Reformed, and so happily Constituted, both in its Worship, Doctrine, and Government, as the *Church of England*, by Law established, is, should have any to take Offence at her Orders, or to separate from her Communion. That a *Government* so prudently contrived, and so admirably tempered, that as the *King* wants no *Power* which a good Prince would desire; so neither does any *People* under Heaven enjoy its *Liberty*, either in so full a Manner, or upon so firm a Security, as we of this Nation do; and the Admini-

Administration whereof is now in the Hands of a *Prince*, as able, as he is desirous, to protect and defend us; should yet meet with such unreasonable Oppositions, through the various Interests and Designs of cunning and disaffected Persons; that it even amazes one to think what shall be the End of our Sin and Ingratitude.

But whatever Differences we may chance to have amongst us as to other Matters, let nothing of this unhappy Nature enter into the Management of this *Charity*, which we are now assembled together, with one accord, to recommend to the Favour both of God and Man. This is properly a *Work of Love*: O let it be carried on with the most *united Affections*! That so, if it be the Will of God, it may be a Means of promoting a more general Union among all of us: Such a Love as becomes those who are *Members* of the same *Civil Society*, and of the same *Church* too; and should therefore, according to St. Paul's arguing, "*Endeavour to keep the Unity of the Spirit, in the Bond of Peace.*"

You cannot be ignorant how directly this *Charity* tends to promote our Unity in one of these, our *Church Communion*; by bringing up our Children, from the Beginning, in the same Doctrine, and Worship: In the Knowledge, and Love, of our *Established Church*; which needs only to be known, that it may also be loved, by all wise and good Christians.

^w Ephes. iv. 3.

And for the other, methinks our very joining together in such a Work as this, should dispose us to a like Union in whatever else may make for the *Publick Welfare*. To think the most kindly and charitably of one another: To be ready to promote the *Peace of our Jerusalem*; and not suffer our Enemies to keep up such a Diversity of Parties, and Interests amongst us, as however they may serve the private Purposes of some Men for the present, yet can tend to nothing but our common Ruine, and Confusion, in the End.

O that this might be another happy Effect of this excellent *Charity*! That it might incline us to, if not work in us all, such a Christian Temper, and Disposition, towards each other!

What a blessed Addition would this make to the other great, and noble Benefits, of this pious Undertaking? What a present Comfort, as well as certain Expectation of future Blessings to proceed from it, would it minister to us, to recompense all our Labours, and Expences, in the pursuit of it?

May the God of Peace inspire every one of us with an ardent desire, a holy Purpose and Resolution of Mind, to make this farther Improvement of the present *Charity*! This would render both our selves, and our Offerings, yet more acceptable to God, and profitable to our Country. It would give the finishing Stroke, the highest Perfection, to this good Undertaking: And shew us to be indeed the Disciples of a *Saviour*, who ^x *so loved us, as*

^x 1 Joh. iii. 16.

to lay down his own Life for our sakes: And who, in return, has both required, and exhorted us, in like manner ^y to love one another; As I have loved you, says he, that ye also love one another.

^z If there be then any Consolation in Christ: If any Comfort of Love: If any Fellowship of the Spirit: If any Bowels and Mercy: ^a Fulfil ye my Joy; or rather (to speak more properly) your own Joy; the exceeding great Joy of all the true Followers of the Blessed JESUS; That ye be like-minded; having the same Love, being of one Accord, of one Mind:

^b And the Peace of God, which passeth all Understanding, keep your Hearts and Minds through Christ Jesus our LORD: To Him with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, be all Honour and Praise, now and for ever. Amen.

^y John xiii. 34, 35.

^z Philip. ii. 1.

^a y. 2.

^b iv. 7.

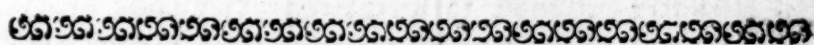


SERMON

S E R M O N X.

Preach'd before the
KING in *St. James's Chapel*,
 Upon the First of *August* 1715.

BEING THE
 First Anniversary Return of His MAJESTY'S
 INAUGURATION.



PSAL. xxi. 1, 2, 3.

*The King shall joy in thy Strength, O
 Lord, and in thy Salvation how greatly
 shall he rejoice?*

*Thou hast given him his Hearts Desire, and
 hast not withholden the Request of his
 Lips.*

*For thou preventest him with the Blessings
 of Goodness; and settest a Crown of
 pure Gold on his Head.*



HO' we cannot certainly tell either *at
 what Time, or upon what Occasion,*
 holy *David* composed this *Psalm*;
 Whether he indited it as a *Form* of
Thanksgiving to *God* for some particular *Victory*
 which

which he had obtained over his Enemies; Or whether he designed it to be a general Commemoration of the Dangers he had run, and the Oppositions he had met with, before he became peaceably established in the Throne, to which it had pleas'd God to call him, and of his Deliverance from them all: This is evident, (and it is all that we can with any Assurance say of it) that we have here a solemn *Hymn of Praise and Glory to God*, for bringing that holy Prophet to be *King* over his People; and for supporting his Authority against all the Power, and Malice, of his Enemies.

Many were the Difficulties which that good Prince had to struggle with, and imminent his Dangers, before he came to the Crown; nor were his Troubles for some time any less afterwards. He met with Unreasonable Oppositions at home, and encounter'd with formidable Enemies abroad. The *Son of Saul*, tho' rejected by *God*, and forsok by the *Men of Judah*, had yet great Numbers out of all the other *Tribes* to stand by him, and support his Pretensions to the Government. And those Enemies of *God*, no less than of *David*, the *Philistines*, the *Moabites*, the *Syrians*, and the *Ammonites*, ceased not to pursue him; and to do, what in them lay, utterly to destroy him. But *God*, who by his own peculiar Designation had called him to the Throne, no less wonderfully supported him in it against all his Opposers: And inspired him in this *Psalm*, not so much probably to conjecture from what he had already done

done for him, that he would still continue to defend him against all his Enemies; as with a full Assurance to declare it: *For the King trusteth in the Lord, and through the Mercy of the Most High he shall not be moved. Thine Hand shall find out all thine Enemies, thy Right-hand shall find out those that hate thee. Thou shalt make them as a fiery Oven in the time of thine Anger: The Lord shall swallow them up in his Wrath, and the Fire shall devour them. Their Fruit shall thou destroy from the Earth; and their Seed from among the Children of Men*^a. For this the *Royal Psalmist* again blesses God in the Conclusion of this *Psalm*, as he had before done, at the beginning of it, for the other: And to compleat his *Thanksgiving*, he directs the Congregation to celebrate, as well the future Felicity, as the past Prosperity, of the *King* whom God had given them: *Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own Strength; so will we Sing and Praise thy Power*^b.

Now this being the plain Scope and Subject of this *Psalm*, I shall not need to enquire whether it was constantly made use of in the Tabernacle, upon the annual Return of King *David's Inauguration*; or whether it was appointed to be sung upon any solemn Occasion, whenever the People were called to commemorate the Blessings which they enjoyed under his Government, and to pray to God for the Continuance of them. It

^a Psal. xxi. v. 7, 8, 9, 10.

^b v. 13.

is enough that taking the *Words* of the *Text*, as they stand with relation to the rest of the *Psalm*; they point out to us the two great Parts of that Service, which we are called, this Day, to perform: Namely,

I. The *Thanksgiving* we owe to *God*, for bringing our *King* to the *Imperial Crown* of this *Realm*. And,

II. The *Vows* we ought to make to *God* on his behalf; and the *Methods* we our selves should take, for the *Continuance* of *God's Protection* over Him: That he, who has thus graciously brought our *Royal Sovereign* to the *Crown*, would also mercifully vouchsafe to bless him (as he did holy *David*) in a long, and happy Enjoyment of it; and defend him against all the Power, and Malice, both of *his*, and *our*, *Enemies*.

These are the two *Points*, which both the *Psalm* directs, and the *Solemnity* of this *Day* requires me to speak to: And which therefore, omitting all farther regard to them as they concern the *Jewish Nation*, I shall now pursue with relation to *our selves*; and that Interest which we of *this Kingdom*, at this time, have in them.

And I^c, Let us consider the *Thanksgiving* we owe to *God*, for bringing his Sacred *Majesty* to the *Imperial Crown* of this *Realm*.

It

It has ever been accounted by all Nations a singular Mark of the divine Favour towards them, to have a *Wise*, a *Just*, and a *Merciful Prince*, to rule over them. The Necessities of Society call for some Government to secure the Peace and Tranquillity of it: Even a bad Prince is thus far a Blessing, that he is better than none at all.

But where a People are settled under a moderate, and well-tempered *Constitution*: Are ruled by *Laws* of their own *chusing*; and those *Laws* are adapted to the *Religion*, the *Manners*, and *Dispositions* of those who are to be governed by them; to their Wants, and Interests at home; and to their Commerce, and Alliances, abroad: To have a steady, constant, and prudent *Prince*, to maintain the Authority of those *Laws*; and keep all things in Peace, and Order, by a due Administration of Justice according to them; must needs be a singular Felicity to every such *People*, and such as ought, upon all Occasions, to be gratefully acknowledg'd to *God*, the Donor of it.

The *inspir'd Writers* warrant us to say of *Kings*, that *They are Gods*: And we may thus far, without Flattery, ascribe that Character to them, that they do *derive their Power from God*, and ought to exercise it after the same manner; and, if they are truly Good, will direct it to the same Ends, that *God* does his. It is the Glory of *God*, and the Happiness of Mankind, that his Providence ruleth over all: That he sets

Bounds to the exorbitant Wills, and Pride of Tyrants: That he supports our Persons, defends our Goods, and preserves our Credit, against those who would otherwise oppress us in any, or all, of these. And the same should be the Care and Endeavour of every *Prince*, under *God*, and as his *Vicegerent*, within his own Dominions; that Portion of the World which God has committed to his Government. His Eyes should be in all the Parts of the Land, to do Justice, and to see that every one securely enjoys his own, without encroaching upon the Rights, or Property, of another. He should employ his Authority to maintain Peace; to prevent, or to suppress, Factions and Divisions; and severely to punish the Authors, and Abettors, of them. He should encourage Piety, and Religion; and should discountenance and correct all Vice and Immorality; Schism, Heresy, and Profaneness; as dishonourable to *God*, and dangerous to the *Common-wealth*. He should consider how the Strength, the Riches, the Commerce, and Interest of his People, may best be promoted; and take such Measures as may be most likely to establish, or encrease, their General Good and Welfare in all these. This *every Prince* should do; and every *Good Prince* will endeavour, as much as in him lies, to do. And as hereby he will be *like unto God*, a kind of *Guardian Angel* to all his Subjects; so it is easy to apprehend what a Blessing such a Prince must needs be to any People: And what good Reason *every Realm*, which enjoys such a Blessing, must have, with

with all Thankfulness, to *praise God* for it; as we therefore of *this Realm* very fitly do this Day.

But there is more than this to warrant the present Solemnity: For, 2^{dly}, It pleased God, as on this Day, not only to give us a *Wise, Prudent, and Powerful KING*, to succeed in the Place of our late *Most Gracious QUEEN*; to sit upon her Throne, and to continue the same Royal Care, and Providence, over us; but to establish him peaceably upon it in a time of Danger, and Difficulty: When both the Interests, and Affections of Men, were so much divided at home; and we had but too many Enemies watching for our Destruction abroad: And when, by consequence, the least Commotion might have been dangerous, if not fatal, to us; and have prepared the way for such a *Revolution*, as would have utterly subverted both our *Liberties*, and our *Religion*.

It is true, their late *Majesties* had taken such good Care to prevent this Danger, as shew'd them no less concerned to continue our Peace, and Tranquillity, after their Deaths; than vigilant to secure it while they lived. They provided, that the Government should proceed in its usual Course, notwithstanding their Demise; and that there should be a sufficient Number of proper Persons appointed to continue the Exercise of the *Regal Power*; and that the *Parliament*, (our best, and surest Support, in all our Dangers, and Difficulties) should immediately be assembled upon their Decease; and see the Government quietly delivered

up to the next *Legal Successor*. This was all that the Wisdom of Man could do to secure the *Protestant Succession*; and disappoint the Designs of our Enemies to set it aside. But that when it pleased *God* to remove her late *Majesty* from us, our *Parliament* should have been so newly risen, that it was hardly separated; That by their Care, and Steadiness, every thing should immediately fall into the right Chancel, with such a general Quiet and Satisfaction, that we scarcely knew that any Change at all had happened among us: That no Disturbance should follow in any Part of the Kingdom, nor any Stop be put to the Publick Affairs of it: This ought certainly to be esteemed a very great Encrease of that Blessing we are now considering; and should proportionably augment our *Thanksgiving* to *God* for it.

And yet I must add still more: For, 3^{dly}, *God* was not only pleased to vouchsafe us a Great, and Wise *King*, to succeed our late Good, and Gracious *Queen*; and to bring him with such an Universal Desire, and Expectation, of all the true Lovers of their Countrey, to the *Imperial Crown of this Realm*; But he has thereby given the utmost Strength, and Confirmation, to the *Limitation of the Succession in the Protestant Line*; upon which the whole Security of our Religion, Laws, and Liberties, depends.

How near we were to have been made a Prey to *Popish Tyranny*; and how wonderfully we were delivered from it, by a *Prince*, whose Memory must therefore ever be most dear to all of us, I shall

shall not need to say. But alas! what would it have availed us to have been then preserved, if as soon as ever it should please God to take him from us, we must again have returned to our former Bondage? Yet this would have been the Case, had not those wise, and necessary, and just *Settlements*, been made, for continuing the *Succession* in the *Protestant Line*; by which we enjoyed the Happiness of Her late *Majesty* first, and are now blessed with the present *Royal Family* to succeed her: And do flatter our selves, that we shall be for ever preserved from falling any more into the like Dangers.

In virtue of these *Settlements* our present *King* justly, and lawfully, reigns over us: And that not by Chance, or in the ordinary Course of *Succession*; but as the Choice, the Desire, the Joy, of a Free, a Willing, and Obedient, People. Now as this adds a new Force and Confirmation to those *Laws* upon which our publick Welfare depends, and provides thereby for our future Safety; so does it also make us happy and secure, in the present Enjoyment of a *Protestant Prince*, to sit upon the Throne of this *Protestant Kingdom*: And at once both to protect *our selves*, and to support the *Protestant Interest* by his Power, and Authority, in all the other Parts of the World.

So that in truth then the Blessing we are now assembled to commemorate, is not barely this, (tho' that would have been sufficient) that we live in Peace and Safety, under a most Graci-

ous

ous *King* of our own *Communion*, but that we live at all. That we are not sacrificed to *Popish Fury*, and an *Arbitrary Power*. That we yet enjoy our *Reformed Religion*; and have the happy Opportunity of assembling in this holy Place, to offer up our *Praises*, and *Thanksgivings* to *God*, for preserving both *us*, and *it*, from those wicked Designs that have so long been forming against both. This is our Blessing, and the Subject of the present Solemnity; And how great a *Blessing* it is, a very little Reflection will suffice to shew. For *Popery* is, without Controversy, the *greatest Evil* that could befall this *Nation*; the worst Enemy both to our *Church*, and *Country*.

If we consider it with respect to our *Church*; I may venture to say that as the *Church of England* is of all the *Reformed Churches* the best constituted both in her *Doctrine*, *Government*, and *Liturgy*; so is it for that Reason, above any other, the chiefest Object of the Hatred, and Malice, of the *Church of Rome*; the most corrupt of any *Christian Church* in the World. The Destruction therefore of the *Church of England*, as it is what the *Papist* the most earnestly desires; so we need not doubt but that whenever an Opportunity shall be offered, he will effectually accomplish it. And should the Limitation of the *Succession* in the *Protestant Line* ever be broken, and a *Popish Prince* be placed upon the *Throne*, he would account it the Glory of his Reign, the most Meritorious of all his Actions, to root
out

out the very Memorial of *this Church* from off the Earth.

And what then will be the Result? Instead of a pure, reasonable, and Evangelical *Faith*, and *Worship*, the Monsters of *Transubstantiation*; of the *Pope's Supremacy*, the *Church's Authority*, and both their *Infallibility*; with all the other Heresies of *Pius the Vth's Creed*, must be received by us. *Saints*, and *Angels*, and even the *Images* of both, Wood and Stone, (the Objects of *Popish*, no less than of the *Heathen Idolatry*) must be Worshipped: The *Publick Service* be again reduced to its *Unknown Tongue*: The *Mass* be restor'd in place of the *Communion*; and the *People* be deny'd one half of that last Legacy, which their dying Saviour bequeathed to them. Then the *Priest* must again be made a Party to every one's Secrets, and our Pardon depend upon his *Absolution*, as well as upon *God's*. If Men be wealthy and liberal, they may indulge their Lusts, and yet not endanger their Salvation: And what then can we expect, but that Sin, which, without any such Encouragement, abounds so much already, should from thenceforth become exuberant; and prevail yet more over all of us, to our present Shame, and our everlasting Damnation?

From all these *Corruptions*, in Matters of Religion, and many more which I want time to enumerate, our *Protestant King*, and *Protestant Establishment*, has set us free. Nor is our *Country* hereby less advantaged than our *Church*: For
Popery

Popery is an Enemy to the one, as well as to the other; and, should it ever be restored, will equally affect the Interests of both.

To pass by the old Pretence which the *Pope* has upon this *Realm* in particular, beyond what he sets up against any other of those which are in Communion with him; or rather (to speak more properly) in Subjection to him: What shall we say, in the *first place*, to the bloody Principles, and savage Demeanour of the *Church of Rome*, towards all such as she is pleased to call *Hereticks*? Can we hope to escape her Fury? Or, tho' we should be willing to change our Religion, yet that, at the beginning, when her Rage runs high, and our Civil Confusions break in, like a Torrent, upon us; and those are at once both increased, and inflamed, by an Army of foreign Missionaries; the Sword will make any Distinction; or consider who may be likely to become Converts? Alas! Massacres, and Military Executions, are not so deliberate: They cut off Friend and Enemy alike; and destroy promiscuously both the one, and the other. 'Tis true, many will escape this first Violence; and some of these by a timely Conversion (an Apostasy worse than Death, and the certain earnest of Eternal Damnation) may save themselves. But for those who shall have the Courage to continue constant in their Faith, Death and Torments must be their Portion: Unless they can happily prevent it by a seasonable Flight into some other Land, where the Enemy has not yet the Power to commit the like Violence.

There

There is nothing, next our Lives, that we ought to account more dear to us than our *Liberty*; and *Popery* will deprive us of that, no less than of other. For, indeed, what *Freedom* can the *People* expect, when the *Prince* is but a *Vassal*; and must submit his Crown to a *Foreign Authority*, and be himself a *Slave* to it; and that under the Pain of being *Excommunicated*, *Deposed*, or even *Murdered*, if he refuses it? Yet such a *Vassal* every *Popish Prince* is. The present Times, and the Princes now reigning, of that Communion, may suffice to convince us how great the *Pope's Authority* is over them. And if we find his Resentments against such Princes, and States, as oppose his Pretensions, exercised somewhat more cautiously now, than they were wont to be heretofore; 'tis not that his Claims are not still the same; but that since the World has been better informed by our Writing, and Preaching against their Usurpations, *Princes* have begun more seriously to consider their own just Rights; and the *Pope* to fear lest by proceeding too rigorously with them, he should force yet more of them to withdraw their Dependence upon him.

But still this Power is sufficiently both asserted, and felt too, by those who are subject to it. And, as to what concerns *our selves*, if we may be allowed to infer from what it once was, what it would be again, should the *Papal Authority* be ever restored over this *Kingdom*; we shall not want abundant Instances to convince us, how intolerably

tolerably burthensome, and even ruinous, it would prove to us.

For to take only a short View of our *State*, as it stood *before the Reformation*: The best, and highest *Promotions*, both for Honour, and Riches, and Power, in the Church, the *Pope* generally reserved to himself; and by his *Provisions* disposed of to such as he knew to be the most devoted to his Service. For the rest, he expected to have his leave asked, before any one could be put in Possession of them. So that, unless the *Pope* pleas'd, neither could the Prince nominate, nor the Clergy chuse, nor the People accept of, any *Bishops*, or *Prelates*; tho' the Necessities of the Church were never so urgent, and the Inconvenience of wanting them never so great. And, after all, their *Bulls*, and *Faculties* were to be fetched from *Rome*; with much Trouble, a vast Expence, and a long Delay. For these, *Oaths of Allegiance* were to be taken to the *Pope*; and, by that Means, the chiefest Members of the Church became *his Subjects* no less than the *King's*. And what publick Calamities this one thing alone has frequently occasioned, when the *Ecclesiastical*, and *Temporal Powers*, have chanced to clash with one another; the Histories of our Countrey, in those Days, sufficiently inform us.

Causes, which are now, as in all reason they ought to be, determin'd *within the Realm*, were sometimes called away to the *Pope's Audience*; but

but oftner carried by *Appeals* to him. To *Rome* we were forced to recur for *Licences* and *Dispensations*, almost upon every Occasion: And by all these Ways, *Money* (the Help and Convenience of every *single Person*, but the main Strength and Support of the *Publick*) was continually drained thither.

It was an early Complaint of the *Commons* in *Parliament*^d, that what the *Pope* carried out of the *Realm*, turned to a greater Destruction of it, than all the *King's Wars*. *Peter-pence*, *Annats*, *Tenths*, the Fees of *Palls*, *Bulls*, and other *Faculties*^e; were a standing, and heavy, Tax upon the *Clergy*. Nor were the Charges of *Suits*, *Appeals*, *Licences*, *Dispensations*, and *Indulgences*; any less upon the *Laity*. Twenty thousand Pounds in King *Edward III.*'s time^f, (a prodigious Sum!) was in open *Parliament* alledged to have been an ordinary Remittance to *Rome*; and how far it increased afterwards, this one Instance in the time of King *Henry VIII.* may shew; When it was computed that the single Tax of *Investitures* for *Bishopricks* alone, without any other Addition, had in a few Years space carried away to *Italy* an hundred and sixty thousand Pounds^g.

This was our Case before the *Reformation*; And this is that which the Return of *Popery* would bring us again to. Whether the Tenure

^d Rot. Parl. Octav. Purific. 25 Edw. III. Num. 13.

^e See Statut. 25 Hen. VIII. cap. 21.

^f Rot. Parl. 51 Edw. III. Num. 78, 79.

^g Antiquit. Britannic. Cranmer.

of *Church*, and *Abbey Lands*, be so well settled, as to put it beyond the Power of the *Papacy* to reclaim them; after what has been lately discovered concerning the Powers, and Proceedings of *Cardinal Pool* upon that Point ^h, may at least deserve to be more seriously considered. To be sure, if they be, our *Statutes of Mortmain* must, in Consideration thereof, be suspended, if not totally repealed, till a competent Number of *Religious Houses* shall be built; and either the old Lands be repurchased, or new ones given, to maintain them. And for this, *Masses*, *Prayers*, *Jubilees*, *Pardons*, *Indulgences*, all the other Arts of *Monkish Knavery*, as well as *Popish Superstition*, must be put in practice; to delude the People, and trick credulous Sinners both out of their Money, and their Souls too.

It would be endless to pursue, tho' never so briefly, all the Dangers, and Mischiefs, which a new Establishment of *Popery* in this *Nation*, would infallibly bring along with it. Blessed be God! who has hitherto preserved us from so great, and fatal, a Judgment: And by setting his *Majesty* upon the *Throne* of these *Kingdoms*, has given us not only a longer Respite, than we lately feared, from it; but withal, just ground to hope that we shall never more fall under the Tyranny of it. Which brings me to the *other Point* I proposed to consider;

^h Bp. Burnet's *Hist. Reform. Introd.* pag. xii, xiii. *Hist. Pr.* III. pag. 245, 246. *Comp. Collect. of Records.* Lib. I. Num. I.

II. Of the *Vows* we ought to make to *God* on the behalf of our *Royal Sovereign*; and the *Methods* we our selves should take for the Continuance of the *Divine Protection* over him: That he who has thus graciously brought him to the *Crown*, may also mercifully vouchsafe to support him (as he did holy *David*) in a long, and *prosperous*, *Enjoyment* of it; and defend him against all the *Power*, and *Malice*, both of *his*, and *our Enemies*.

I have already shewn you how much our *Interest* requires us to *desire* this; and I heartily wish the *undutiful Behaviour* of many among us did not prove it to be but too necessary for us to think of the most effectual *Methods* of obtaining of it. But, indeed, such is either the Perverseness, or Infatuation of some Persons, that they seem even to seek the *publick Ruin*. They envy us the Peace and Security we enjoy under the present Government: And can hardly forbear openly to call for a *Change*, the very Thoughts of which may suffice at once both to astonish, and to inflame, every true Lover of his Country, with a generous Zeal to use his utmost Endeavours for the Prevention of it. And certainly then, we cannot but account it highly reasonable for us, in the *first Place*, to put up our most ardent *Prayers* to *Almighty God* for the Preservation of our *King*, in the like manner, and with the same dutiful Affection, that the *Jews* in this *Psalms*, were both directed, and assisted, to

offer up their *Vows* on the Behalf of Theirs: (O! may we do it with the same good Success;) *That*ⁱ *God would prolong his Life, and increase his Renown; and make his Happiness so remarkable as to become Proverbial:* That when any one would wish the utmost *Prosperity* to any *Prince*, it would be enough to wish him as happy a *Reign*, as that of *our King*. To this end; ^k *That his Hand may find out all his Enemies, and his Right-hand find out those that hate him. That he may destroy them as speedily, and as compleatly too, as the fiery Oven does the Fewel that is cast into it: Yea that God Himself would swallow them up in his Wrath, and like Fire devour them.* That as^l *They intended Evil against Him, and imagined a mischievous Device which they were not able to perform; so they may pay dear for their Treachery; and turn their Backs in a Shameful Flight,* ^m *when He shall make ready his Arrows against the Face of them.*

Thus were the *Jews* directed by the *Holy Spirit* in this *Psal*m, with a full Assurance to pray for, if not to prophesy of, the Felicity of their *King*. O! let us all, in like manner, pray for *ours*; and then we may hope that we shall also do it with the same Success: And that, (to use here again the *Words* of the *Royal Psalmist*;) ⁿ *God will gird him with Strength unto the Battel; and throw down his Enemies under him.* He

ⁱ Psal. xxi. 4, 5, 6.^k y. 8, 9.^l y. 11.^m y. 12.ⁿ Psal. xviii. 39, 40.

will make them to turn their Backs upon him; so that he shall destroy them that hate him. ° They shall cry, but there shall be none to save them: Yea even unto the Lord shall they cry, but he shall not hear them. P He shall beat them as small as the Dust before the Wind; he shall cast them out as the Dirt in the Streets.

But especially, if to our hearty *Prayers* to God for our King, we shall add, *Secondly*, our own constant *Endeavours* to support his *Crown* and *Dignity*; and pursue such *Methods* as will be the most likely to strengthen his Hands, and to defend his Authority, against all the malicious Attempts both of *his*, and *our*, *Enemies*.

And *First*, Since our Security, after all that we can do to establish it, will depend entirely upon God's Favour and Blessing, against whom no Strength nor Counsel can prevail; If we would engage his Special Protection over our King, our Church, and our Country; we must, in the first place, take care to qualify our selves for it by a true Repentance of all our Sins, and a hearty Concern for his Honour and Service. Our Religion is Pure and Holy: We have the best Principles, both of Faith, and Morals, of any Christian Church in the World. And in this respect, we far exceed our Enemies, who have certainly the worst Principles in both these, and take the most Uncharitable, and Unchristian Methods of Propagating their Religion, and force Men, in

° Psal. xviii. 41.

P Y. 42.

outward Shew, to conform to it, tho' they know at the same time, that they are not, can not, be convinced of the Truth of it. O! let us adorn our Holy Profession by a Peaceable, Pious, and Unblameable Conversation. If we cannot make Men truly, and sincerely good; let us, at least, take care that they be not openly, and scandalously, wicked. Let us employ those Means which the *Laws* of the *Land*, as well as the *Commands* of *God*, furnish us withal, to put some stop to that Spirit of Prophaneness, and Irreligion, which is gone out among us: And not let that be ours, which was once the *Condemnation* of the *Jewish* and *Gentile World*; that *Light is come into the World, and Men love Darknes rather than Light, because their Deeds are Evil. But while we have the Light*, (the pure and undefiled *Doctrine of Christ* openly professed, and taught among us) *let us walk as becomes the Children of Light*. This, if we do, we may then justly hope that our *Religion* shall be our *Security*: And that *God* will not give up the best part of his *Church*, to be overthrown by those, who would introduce the worst, and most corrupt *Christianity*, into the place of it.

Next to our *Piety* towards *God*, as nothing can be more likely to secure the publick Peace and Welfare, so neither should we be more careful of any thing, *Secondly*, than to exercise our

¶ St. Jo. iii. 19.

¶ Ephes. v. 8.

selves in a constant, and conscientious, *Obedience* to *the King* whom he has set over us. This our Duty requires, and I need not say that our Interest engages us so to do: It being certain that his *Majesty* can have no *Enemies*, but what must be *Ours* too; nor can any one *attempt*, or *imagine*, any *Evil* against his *Person*, *Crown*, or *Dignity*; but with a Design to bring the most fatal *Destruction* upon the *whole Kingdom*. Let us therefore, as we are both in Duty, and Interest, obliged, resolve faithfully to serve, honour, and humbly obey him. To defend his Right, to maintain his Authority, and to do our part to render his Government a publick Blessing to all his People. But especially let us of the *Establish'd Church*, be more than ordinary careful to express the most affectionate Duty to a Prince who both does us the Honour to join in the same *Communion* with us, and has already begun to extend such a large Share of his *Royal Favour*, and *Beneficence*, towards us.

It has been the distinguishing Mark of the *Church of England*, and by some accounted one of the highest, and most eminent parts of her Character, that she teaches the *strictest Measures of Obedience to the Higher Powers*; and condemns *all Resistance of lawful Authority, as Rebellious, and Sinful*: Insomuch that it may be questioned, whether some of her Communion have not run a little too far in their *Principles of Loyalty*; and carried them to a degree not altogether reconcileable with the Publick Safety,

But sure then I may beg Leave to say, that if such be our *Principles*, we ought the rather to see that we act agreeably thereunto: And by our quiet, peaceable, and orderly *Submission* to his *Majesty*, and his *Government*, convince our very *Enemies*, that we are indeed as good *Subjects* as we pretend, and as our *Principles* require us to be. This will not only raise the Credit of our *Church*, but will withal promote the publick Good, and Tranquillity, of our *Country*. And we may then justly boast of our *Loyalty*, when, with the Old *Apologist*, we can truly say, that in all the Disturbances which have broke out among us, none of the *Church of England* have been any way concerned. It has been our Business to suppress those Tumults which others have raised; not to assist, or encourage them. *Unde Cassii, & Nigri, & Albini?* Let Enquiry be made who they are that have disturbed the Peace of their Country: That have raised these late Ferments, and Seditions, among us; as much without Cause, as against their Duty. Oh! that I could answer as that *Writer* did, *De Romanis, ni fallor, id est, de non Christianis*, That they were *Englishmen*, perhaps, but not of the *Church of England*. In the mean time, God be praised, this I may affirm, that our *Church* neither teaches any seditious Doctrines, nor allows of any Enterprizes contrary to the Peace, and Authority, of our *Governors*. The best, and greatest of its

† Tertull. Apolog. cap. xxxv.

Members, both for Number and Quality, live so as their Duty requires, and their Religion prescribes; and openly declare their Abhorrence of those who do otherwise. And we hope a little time will convince the Unruly, of the Danger, if not of the Wickedness, of their Disobedience: And make them agree with us in the same dutiful Subjection to his *Majesty* which our *Church* teaches; and obey him *for Wrath*, if, after all their high Pretensions, they will not do it (as they ought) *for Conscience sake*.

To our *Piety* towards God, and *Loyalty* to our *King*, let us, *Thirdly*, as becomes our Holy Religion, and the Name by which we are called, add our *Brotherly Love, and Charity, towards one another*. Let us live in peace, and not continue any longer those fatal Divisions which have so often exposed us both to the Danger, and Reproach, of our common Enemies. To this end, let us lay aside all such *Names, and Marks of Distinction*, as minister only to Strife and Contention: Or, if any must remain, let it be that alone, which our *Great Deliverer* recommended to us in his last, and almost Dying *Speech*, to his *Parliament*; of *Those who are for the Protestant Religion, and the Present Establishment; and those who mean a Popish Prince, and a French Government*.

It was our *Saviour's* Observation, and may deserve to be considered by us no less for the Sea-

^c The King's Speech, Dec. 31. 1701.

sonableness, than for the Authority of it, that " *a Kingdom divided against its self, is brought to Desolation.* And tho' it has pleased God hitherto wonderfully to preserve us, notwithstanding all our unhappy Divisions; yet we must not expect to be always saved by Miracles: But should fear, lest if we shall continue to ^w *bite and devour one another, we be, in the end, consumed one of another.*

What may be the Issue of that desperate Attempt which our Enemies are now again making upon us, we can none of us tell. We *hope* (and God be praised, we have *good reason to hope*) that it shall turn, as it deserves, to their own Confusion. But this I will be bold to say, that they would never have dared to venture upon such an Enterprize, had not our Factions, and Contentions among our selves, encouraged them to it: And prompted them to believe that our Quarrels might possibly give Success to their Endeavours; and render us a Prey even to a contemptible Adversary.

It should therefore be our Wisdom, as it is our Duty, to *consider in this our Day the things that make for our Peace*: And in order thereunto, we should not think it sufficient to establish such a happy *Unity* among our selves at Home; but, *Fourthly*, as becomes a *People* professing its self the *Head* of the *Protestant Interest*, and that is indeed of all others the most worthy so to

^u Mat. xii. 25.

^w Gal. v. 15.

be; we should endeavour, yet farther, to *unite* all the *Reformed Churches*, and *States Abroad*, in the strictest bonds of Love, and Peace (Oh! that I might add, and of *Church-Communion* too) both *among themselves*, and *with us*; as our surest Defence against our Common Enemies.

We are all of us but too sensible of the bitter *Persecutions* which have within these few Years last past, been raised against those of the *Reformed Religion*, in Foreign Parts. What Cruelties they have undergone; what Losses they have sustained; and how much very many of them still continue to suffer for their Faith's sake. And we cannot doubt but that our restless *Adversaries* are still at work; and would be glad, if it were possible, to destroy the very Name of *Protestant* from off the Face of the Earth.

How near they were to have brought us of *this Nation* under the same Bondage, I shall not need to say. The thing is still fresh in your Memories. Never was more done, in so short a time towards the Subversion of our *Constitution* both in *Church*, and *State*. It was the Maxim of him who then reigned, that *he must take large Steps*; and so he did. Our Army, our Courts of Justice, our Privy-Council, our Universities, our Schools, were all begun to be filled with those of the *Papish Religion*; and our *Laws*, and *Tests*, were arbitrarily *dispensed with*, for the doing of it. *Nuncio's* were dispatched from *Rome* hither, and
Ambassa.

Ambassadors sent from hence to Rome. The Bishops, and Priests, of that Communion, were appointed to go openly throughout the Kingdom, to confirm their own Party, and to corrupt those of the Established Church. To intimidate our Bishops, and Clergy, an Ecclesiastical Commission (and that too contrary to Law) was framed, to hinder them from Preaching, or Writing against Popery; and to ruin those who would not be frightened by them. One Bishop was suspended; several others, with their Archbishop, were sent Prisoners to the Tower. A whole College was turned at once out of their Right, and Freehold. To Petition the King, was accounted a High Crime and Misdemeanor; and yet more to Represent to him, tho' in the most submissive manner, the Illegality of his Proceedings.

In this dangerous, and almost desperate Estate, a Neighbour Prince, and Nation, took pity on us: They brought us that Succour from abroad, which we knew not where to look for at home. By this seasonable Assistance we escaped the Ruin that was coming upon us. How soon we may need the like Assistance again to prevent the like Destruction, I cannot tell: But doubtless the Consideration of the Power, and Malice of our Enemies, and of the Necessity we are under to unite our Strength for our mutual Defence, should engage us all, who are called by the Name of Protestants, to enter into a common League of Love, and Peace, and Unity, with one another: And make us ready to help, and assist each other,
in

in what Place, or by what Party soever, we shall see our *Religion in Danger*; or *our selves persecuted for our Religion's sake*.

But especially one would hope, that the Consideration of what we of *this Nation* have both seen and felt, should inspire us with a Holy Zeal to support, and defend our *own Church*, the most valuable Concern of any in this World to us. For this we all profess, and I am persuaded that, amidst all our other Differences, we every one of us truly have, a particular regard. O! then let us for the sake of this *Beloved Church*, if for nothing else, Beware, how we engage in any Measures, or give Encouragement to any Attempts, which may endanger her Peace, and Constitution; much more which we are sure will utterly destroy it; as *Popery*, should it ever return upon us, of Necessity must do.

And for the same Reason, *Fifthly*, and *Lastly*, Let us resolve, as we are most bounden, firmly to adhere to, and constantly to support (tho' with the hazard of all that is dear to us) *the Succession of the Crown, as it is settled by Law in the Protestant Line*; and upon that *Royal Family*, which, pursuant to that Settlement, is now, by the Blessing of God, in the *Lawful, and Rightful Possession of it*.

For your encouragement wherein, I shall neither say any thing in the just Praise of his sacred Majesty, nor represent to you the Blessing of that comfortable Prospect which God has given us, of a numerous Race of excellent *Princes* descending from

from him; to make our Posterity as happy under theirs, as we our selves are under his own most auspicious Government. It may suffice to desire you barely to reflect what must be the Consequence of setting aside this *Succession*. For sure no one who has known what it is to live under the mild, and gentle *Constitution* of this *Realm*, both in *Church* and *State*, would be willing to become a Slave to *Arbitrary Power* in both. *Liberty*, and *Property*, have not so far lost their Charms, that one would chuse *Servitude*, and *Poverty*, before them. Nor is *Ecclesiastical Tyranny* so very amiable, as to make a generous Mind desirous of returning to it. And yet this is really the Case. Under the present *Limitation* of the *Crown*, all is safe. We are a *Free People*: We know what our *Laws* prescribe; and that by virtue of those *Laws*, we can every one of us call what we have our own. We have a Prince endued with sufficient *Power* to protect us; but without any *Legal Authority* to injure, or destroy us. We have a *Church* truly *Christian*, *Primitive*, *Apostolical*: That is neither defective in any thing necessary to our Salvation; nor teaches or requires, any thing that is either Repugnant to it, or may be Destructive of it. But if once we depart from this *Succession*, all is gone. Our *Constitution*, our *Church*, our *Laws*, and our *Liberties*, must all sink with the *present Establishment*, and give place to such a Yoke as the *Conqueror* shall think fit to lay upon us.

How

How far we were begun to be oppressed in all these, by a Prince who had engaged his *Royal Word* to protect us in every one of them°, and had all the Obligations that it was possible for a *Protestant People* to lay upon a *Popish King*, to have kept that *Word* with us, I have already shewn. What may we not then expect, or rather fear, from one who accounts himself so *highly provoked*, as the present *Pretender* to the *Throne*; and who has been all his Life bred up in *Principles* utterly inconsistent both with our *Liberties*, and our *Religion*. Men may deceive themselves, and endeavour to delude others, as they will; but should we ever be so unhappy as to make the Experiment, I doubt we should find the Case would be with us, as *Rehoboam* heretofore declar'd to the *Jews* it should be with them, under his Government, 1 *Kings* xii. v. 14. *My Father made your Yoke heavy, and I will add to your Yoke: My Father also chastised you with Whips, but I will chastise you with Scorpions.*

But, *God forbid!* that any such fatal Judgment should ever fall upon us. *God forbid!* that it should ever be in the Power of our Enemies thus to destroy *both us, and our King*. On the contrary, I am persuaded, that if to our hearty *Prayers to God*, we will but add our own constant, sincere *Endeavours*, to support our *Royal Sovereign*, by such *Methods* as I have now proposed; we shall enable him, thro' the divine As-

° See his first Speech to his Privy Council and first Parliament,

sistance,

sistance, with holy *David*, to triumph over all his Enemies; and shall long enjoy the *Blessings of Peace*, under his wise, and just Government.

And O! that we would all of us take these *Methods*, to demonstrate the true Sense we have of the Blessings which we do enjoy, of our *Religion*, and *Liberties*, under his Care and Protection! That we would every one of us use our utmost Diligence, in our several Places and Stations, to establish his Throne, to strengthen his Hands, and to disappoint, and defeat the Designs of all such as wish any Evil, either to his Person, or his Authority.

It is a noble Example, and scarce to be parallel'd in any part of our History, which our present *Parliament* has set us, of an affectionate Zeal and Loyalty to the best of *Kings*. Our *Bishops*, and *Clergy*, in *Convocation*, have cheerfully follow'd their Example. And I am persuaded, there is no true *Britain* who would not readily join with them in the same dutiful Resolutions, and Resentments; and pursue, with the utmost Indignation, the wicked Attempts of those who would at once both destroy our *King*, subvert our *Church*, and enslave the *Kingdom*.

May the *God of Heaven* crown all our Endeavours for his *Majesty's* Service with Success equal to his own Desires, and to our Needs!

May he be blessed with a wise, and steady *Council*; with faithful and valiant *Commanders*; with a victorious *Fleet*, and *Army*; with a religious, learned, and prudent *Clergy*; with a quiet, peaceable, and obedient, *People*!

May his *Reign* be prosperous, and his *Days* many! May no *Designs* formed against him prosper! May he become the *Joy* of his *Friends*; the *Terror* of his *Enemies*; the *Support* of his *Allies*; the *Defender* of our *Church*, and *Realm*; the *Delight* of *Mankind*!

May he perfect that *Glorious Deliverance*, which *God*, by his *Royal Predecessor*, so happily began for us! And when it shall please the same *God*, who set this *Crown of Gold* upon his *Head*, to remove him from it, may he exchange it for a more blessed, and eternal *Crown of Glory* in his *Heavenly Kingdom*; thro' *Jesus Christ* our *Lord*.

To whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit; be Honour, and Glory, and Power, and Praise, and Thanksgiving, for ever and ever. Amen.



S E R M O N XI.

Preached before the

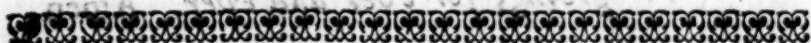
KING in St. *James's* Chapel,Upon the Thirtieth of *January*, 1715.

BEING THE

DAY of the MARTYRDOM

O F

KING CHARLES I.



MATT. xii. 25.

*Every Kingdom divided against its self is
brought to Desolation.*



THESE Words being nothing else but
a *Maxim* founded upon humane Reason
and Observation, as well as approved
of by our *Saviour's* Divine Wisdom;
I shall not need to trouble you with
any Enquiry into the Occasion that was
here

here given for the Use of them. It is enough that they carry a compleat Sense in themselves; and have, God knows, but too plain a Relation to the mournful Solemnity of this Day.

We are now assembled to commemorate the *Murder* of a great and good *Prince*, cut off by the Hands of his own People: To consider the Rise, the Progress, and Consummation, of so unparalleled a Villany: And at once both to express our unfeigned Detestation of what those wicked Men, the (Authors, and Executioners, of this accursed Fact) heretofore did; and to guard our selves by the consideration of what was then done, from ever being drawn into the like Crime. And, in order hereunto, I know not how I could better contribute my Part, than by reasoning with you upon the *Words* before us. The plain Import of which is this: That Factions, and Divisions, in any *Kingdom*, are the readiest Means *to bring it to Desolation*; and unless a timely Stop be put to them, will be but too likely to ruin and destroy it. This was the Case in our own Unnatural Civil War; the result of which we are now met to bewail. Fears and Jealousies divided our Minds, and raised our Animosities against one another. Party, and private Interest, kept them up, and increased them: Till at last the Fire broke out with an irresistible Violence; and brought all to Ruin and Confusion. Destruction, and Desolation, encompass'd us on every side: Our *Church* was laid waste; our *Monarchy* subverted; and our *Royal Sovereign*, the Guardian of both, was brought

X 2

brought to Execution. Instead of a *King* and *Parliament*, we had neither *King*, nor *Parliament*, left us; but the scandalous Remainder of the One, and I know not what sort of Governor, under the Name of a *Protector*, for the Other, Ruled, or rather Domineer'd, over us: Till finally being wearied with our own Changes, and always for the worse; it pleas'd God by a Miracle of Mercy to bring us back again to that orderly State, from which we had so long, and unhappily, departed.

Such was the fatal Effect of our mutual Contentions! And so fully was the Truth of our *Text* accomplish'd, to our present Ruine, and to our lasting Reproach; that *Every Kingdom divided against its self, is brought to Desolation.*

For the better clearing of which Remark, and that I may in some measure answer the Design of the *Present Solemnity*; I will in the following Discourse,

First; Consider the *Truth* of this *Maxim*, in the general Ground, and Reason, of it. And,

Secondly; As I proceed, will apply the Observations I shall have occasion to insist upon, to our *own Troubles*, and *Confusions*; and so bring them home to the unhappy Subject, and Business, of this Day.

To shew, *in the General*, how natural a Tendency Factions and Divisions are apt to have, to expose

expose a Kingdom, or People, to Destruction; I must observe, that the Ruin of such Societies may proceed from a Two-fold Cause; either from the Force, and Violence, of a Foreign Enemy; or from its own Tumults, and Contentions, within its self. The latter of which, tho' it be, alone, sufficient to overthrow any Nation, as our own Experience has abundantly shewn; does yet often give occasion to the former also: Whilst the opposite Parties at Home, divide the Counsels that should be taken, and defeat the Preparations that should be made, to oppose the common Enemy; and sometimes actually invite him in; and help him to gain that Conquest of their own Country, which he could never have been able any other-wise to accomplish.

But this is not that which I am now to insist upon: The *Desolation* I am, at present, to consider, is that which proceeds from the *Inward Subversion of the State and Government*. And what a fatal aptitude Factions, and Divisions, have to procure this; and how effectually those of our own Countrey, in the last Age, did accomplish it; I come now particularly to shew.

It is agreed by all who have ever consider'd these Matters with any Care, or Knowledge; that the Peace and Prosperity of a Kingdom are then the best promoted, and most firmly established, when there is a right Understanding between the Prince, and People: When they are both united in one common Interest; and not only aim at the same End, but agree in the same Measures to accom-

plish that End. As, on the other hand; if at any time it falls out, whether by Design, or by Mistake; by the Folly of some, or the Cunning of others, that this good Understanding is impair'd; so that either the Prince grows jealous of the Affections, or Intentions, of his People; or the People become intoxicated with Fears and Apprehensions, of the Power, or Proceedings, of their Prince; If these Diffidences arise so high as to produce an utter Distrust between them; and, in consequence thereof, they are both made uneasy with one another: If, lastly, by these Means they come to have their different Ends, instead of mutually uniting in the same common End, the publick Good; so that what the one the most rationally desires, and most industriously pursues, is for that very reason opposed, and obstructed, by the other; It is obvious to discern that this must needs weaken the strength of such a Kingdom, and lay the Foundation of worser Evils; and, unless some speedy Remedy be provided, will bring it to Ruin, and Confusion.

Let me, for the truth of these Remarks appeal to the History of our own Country. It is well known what powerful Enemies this Nation had at the *beginning* of the *Reformation*: When the Malice and Policy of *Rome*; the Arms of *Spain*; and the Abettors of another *Title* to the *Crown of England*, were all combined against us. Nor did there want a malignant Party within, to favour the Cause, and promote the Interest, of the Enemy without. And yet, how invincibly did
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we then stand, by the Blessing of God, against all their Attempts? Whilst the *Court*, and the *Coun-
tre*y; the *Queen* and the *People*, kept up a con-
stant good Understanding with one another: And
as they did both truly pursue the publick Welfare,
so they both had an entire Opinion of, and Confi-
dence in each other, that both did so.

This was the Felicity of that *Reign*; the Ho-
nour of our *Coun*tre;y; the Wonder of *Europe*;
and the Disappointment, and Confusion of all
our *Enemies*. It made our *Queen*, and our *Na-
tion* revered in those Days; and will continue
to render their Wisdom and Happines, the Praise
and Admiration of all that shall hereafter read the
History of their Conduct.

On the contrary; never was any People more
happy, or secure, than we of this Kingdom were,
for several Years, under the Government of the
Royal Martyr of this Day. We enjoy'd a con-
stant Peace and Tranquillity Abroad; and we grew
wanton in our Riches, and our Vices too, at Home.
Plenty and Prosperity flow'd in upon us on every
side. Such was our State, that scarce any thing
could have hurt us but our own Quarrels. And
yet, how did some little Misunderstandings, which
at first might easily have been removed, alienate
the Affections of many from the Government,
and give them opportunity to poison the Minds
of more, in all Parts of the Realm? Into what
Streights, and Difficulties, did this bring us?
Whilst first the King was constrained to exercise
some Arbitrary, and Offensive Acts of Power, to

support his Wants; and these were so successfully magnified and improved among the People, by Men of factious and unquiet Spirits, that the Hearts of both, became every Day more estranged from one another. Thus all things went on to greater, and more dangerous Divisions; and at length broke out into an open War: And ended not but in the Murder of the King; the Destruction of many thousands of the People; the Ruin of our Government both in Church and State; and the Shame and Reproach of the whole Kingdom.

But not to rest in these general Reflections; but to come to a more distinct and particular Proof of the Truth of my *Text*. To secure the Peace, and Happiness of any Kingdom, these *Four* things seem necessarily required:

1st, That those who are *advanced by the Prince to any Places of Publick Trust*, should be *competently qualified* for the *Discharge* of the *Duties* of them.

2^{dly}, That they should *manage themselves impartially*, in their several *Places*, for the *Publick Good*.

3^{dly}, That those who shall from time to time be *chosen by the People*, to *aid, and advise the Prince*, in the *Great and Difficult Affairs of the Realm*; should be such as may be both *capable of discharging the Great Trust* reposed in them, and *likely so to do*. And,

4^{thly}, That

4^{thly}, That the *People* should be generally disposed to *love* and *obey* their *Prince*; to approve of his Proceedings; and be ready to help and assist him in all things that tend to the common Welfare.

These are such things without which no Kingdom can long stand; nor any Nation be either quiet, or secure. If therefore *Divisions* in any State, will be evermore apt to interrupt these; if instead of prompting Men to do those things, in their several Places, and Stations, which tend to the publick Good, they will rather dispose them to act quite contrary thereunto: It must then follow, that they are the ready Means to *bring a Kingdom to Desolation*; and that where the one prevail, the other cannot long stand.

1st, To secure the Peace, and Happiness of any People, it is requisite " That *those who are advanced by the Prince* to any *Places of Trust*, " and *Authority*, in the *Government*, should be " *competently qualified for the discharge of them*: Because upon these, the good, or bad Administration of the publick Policy will depend; and as they are duly qualified, or not, to advise and act; so the great Affairs of State, with which they are entrusted, will either proceed wisely, and justly, and steddily; or else be rashly, and unjustly, and unsteddily, carry'd on. And what a powerful Influence this must have upon the Peace, and Welfare, of the Society, every Man's Reason will tell him; and there are but very few, whose

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own Observation must not have, either way, confirmed it to them.

Princes, how glorious soever they may appear, are yet but Men. They can neither be every where present to see, and order, their own Affairs; nor are they able, alone, to transact even that part of them, which the most nearly belongs to themselves to take care of. They must therefore have some others both to advise, and assist them. They must Hear with other Mens Ears; and See with other Mens Eyes; and Act by other Mens Hands. Their very Justice its self must be dispensed by other Persons: And upon the wise, and well doing of all this, the Happiness, or Misery, of a whole Kingdom depends.

It is therefore a Matter of the utmost Consequence to the Publick Welfare both of the Prince and People, what Persons are employ'd in the Great Affairs of State. That they be Men of Wisdom and Experience; of Knowledge and Capacity; of Industry and Integrity; of Virtue and Sobriety; but, above all, of strict Justice and Honesty. That they be free from Pride, and hating Covetousness; and incapable of being either bribed, or byass'd, to do a wicked thing.

Such a Ministry as this will render a Prince Great, and a Kingdom Happy. But if instead of these Endowments, Men are taken into Places of Trust and Power, not for Merit, but for Favour; not because they are either fit for them, or will be likely to do any good in them, but because they may be useful to those who promote them: If
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Strife and Faction be made the Standard of Worth and Capacity; and it be not so much consider'd who is best qualify'd to do the Publick Service, as who will be most proper to carry on some other private, and sinister Designs; it is evident that both the Prince, and People, must suffer by their Means: And the whole Nation be in danger of coming to Desolation, thro' the Weakness, or Wickedness, of those who have the management of its Great Affairs committed to them.

Now this will generally be the Effect of *Divisions* in any Kingdom. I speak not here of such *Divisions* in which the Safety of the *Government* its self is concern'd; and Men are grown to such a Pitch of Insolence, as to dare openly to dispute the *Prince's Authority*, and to do what in them lies to *destroy* both their *King*, and their *Country*. Such Persons as these, be their Capacities in other respects what they will, are so far from being fit to be entrusted with, or employ'd in, the publick Affairs of State, that it would be a Treachery of the highest kind to afford any Countenance to them; much more to put any Power into their Hands. The *Divisions* I mean are of a lesser kind: Such as may arise, and too often have done so, among those who live under the same Government, and equally agree in their Obligations to submit to, and support it. And how far such *Divisions*, if they rise up to any height, will be apt to influence the choice of those who are to administer the great Affairs of the Realm, and by that means turn to the publick Detriment,

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the Experience of all Ages, and Countries, has too plainly shewn.

It is but a little way that the personal Knowledge of the wisest Princes can go in the Judgment, and Choice, of their Ministers. Their Station, and Character, which affords them so many Advantages in other respects, debars them of that Freedom of Conversation, and those Opportunities of Tryal, without which it is almost impossible to judge of Mens Abilities, and Integrity. Even those whom they admit into their Presence, are under such a caution and restraint before them; that it is difficult from their Carriage, or Discourse with them, to determine what their real Temper, or Disposition, or, it may be, their very Principles, are.

They must therefore, in this great Affair, depend upon the Report of those who are about them; and chuse their Ministers by other Mens Judgment more than their own. If therefore those who have the recommending of such as are to serve the Publick committed to them, be engaged in any Parties, or Designs, different from the common Welfare of their King, and Country, themselves; if they have an undue Affection for, or a private Interest to serve by, one sort of Men, rather than another; and want that generosity of Spirit which should prompt them to consider the publick Safety more than their own; 'tis plain, that the Government, instead of being equally inclined towards the whole Body of the People, will be restrained to that part of it which has the
good

good fortune to be favoured by those upon whom the Prince relies; and that all others will be shut out as useless, if not dangerous, and disaffected.

And what an unhappy Influence this will be likely to have upon the Peace and Establishment of any Kingdom, I shall not need to say. When once a Nation becomes jealous of its Governors, and according to an unhappy modern Distinction, the *Court* is look'd upon to have one Interest, and the *Country* another; how is it possible that Affairs should proceed smoothly, and vigorously, for the common Good of both? This must clog the Wheels of Action, and cause the publick Business to go with Struggle and Difficulty. There will be Art, and Industry, used on both sides, to defeat one another's Designs: And this will widen the Breach, and raise the Animosities to a greater height. Every Miscarriage in the Administration of Affairs (and in such Circumstances it can hardly fail but that Miscarriages there will be) will give occasion to new Discontents: And whencesoever they really proceed, each side will be sure to impute them to the fault, or frowardness, of the other.

Thus it was under that unfortunate *Prince*, whose Tragedy we now lament. The *Chief Managers of his Affairs* (whether justly, or not, it becomes not me to determine) were either by their own Imprudence, or through the Artifice of others, look'd upon as *Enemies of the People*. His *Parliaments*, which were assembled for other purposes, made the *Prosecution* of their real, or pretended

pretended *Crimes*, the main Business of their *Debates*: And the *Ministers*, in Requital, soon found means to get rid of those *Parliaments*; and by degrees to govern altogether without them. And when at last, after twelve Years Interruption, the Affairs of the Realm necessarily required their Renewal; and, to satisfy their Demands, the *Chiefest Ministers* were removed, and some of them sacrificed to their *Resentments*; and others of a different Stamp were taken into their Places; yet even they so managed themselves as to shew that they had more concern to gratify a Party, than to pursue either the King's, or the Kingdom's Peace: Till finally, the Principal of them openly took up Arms against their Master, and headed those who began the *Rebellion* against him. To speak more particularly in so nice a Matter, might perhaps be offensive, but I am sure 'tis needless. Their Characters, and their Actions, are at large recorded in the late noble *History* of those Times: A Monument more durable than if they had been engraven in Brass, or Marble. There the present Age may read, and Posterity will see, how basely they first betray'd, and then deserted, their Royal Sovereign; whose Domestic Servants they were: And by their private Designs and Animosities began those Troubles, which at last brought his Sacred Head to the Block. But,

2^{dly}, " To establish the Peace and Tranquillity
 " of any People, there should be not only such a
 " Care taken, as I have now shewn, of the choice
 " of

“ of those who are to be *admitted* into any
 “ *Places of Trust* in the State; but they who
 “ are called to such Places, should be no less fol-
 “ licitous to *manage themselves Impartially in*
 “ *them, for the publick Good.* Without this,
 the better qualify'd any such Persons are for Parts
 and Abilities, the more dangerous they will be to the
 common Welfare; and the more capable of doing
 Mischief: Whilst their Cunning, and Policy, sug-
 gest to them the most subtle ways of promoting
 their own unwarrantable Designs; and their In-
 terest, and Authority, furnish them both with
 Means, and Instruments, to accomplish whatsoever
 they project, or desire.

There is nothing more ominous to any State,
 than a Set of wicked *Achitophels* at the Head of
 its Affairs: Whose Credit and Policy, whose
 Thoughts and Contrivances, tend not so much to
 the Peace and Prosperity of their Prince, or Coun-
 try, as how to pursue their own Interests, or Re-
 sentments. And yet where *Divisions* arise to an
 undue height in any Kingdom, this will be more
 or less the result of them. Whether the Govern-
 ment leans generally one way, and the People
 another; or whether the several Parties struggle
 pretty equally in both; those who are in Autho-
 rity will, in either Case, have many to envy their
 Greatness, and to censure their Conduct; to un-
 dermine them in their Interest, and if it be possi-
 ble, to bring them down from their Power, and
 Dignity. Now this will naturally engage them in
 such Measures as may be most likely to support
 themselves,

themselves, tho' to the Detriment of the Publick. Instead of minding what may best advance the Welfare of the Realm, their Business will be to secure their own: To gain some Persons, to discredit others; to raise these, and to depress those. For this they must strengthen one sort of Men; must weaken another; as their own private Safety shall require: And to this all other Considerations, tho' of never so much Importance to the publick Good, will be likely to be sacrificed by them.

This was another Ground of those *Civil Confusions* which brought on the detestable *Paricide* of this Day. Our Affairs abroad, in the Beginning of the Reign of our *Royal Martyr*, made it necessary for him to assemble several *Parliaments* one after another. These were Warm against the *Chief Managers at Court*, and that not altogether without Reason, as the Honourable *Relator* of those Matters informs us. To secure themselves against their Pursuits, several *Parliaments* were *dissolved*; and a Resolution seemed to be taken of not holding any more. Those who had acted with any remarkable *Vigour in Parliament*, or opposed their *too Arbitrary Proceedings out of it*, were imprison'd, and disgraced. To supply their Master's Needs, without danger to themselves, several *extraordinary Methods* were set on Foot for *levying Money*, and *Judges* prepared to *give Countenance* to them. This raised new Discontents in the People; and those brought on some dangerous Proceedings in
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the Court, to quiet and suppress them. In the Court, as well as in the Kingdom, several *Opposite Parties* strove against each other; and every one thought more how to suppress its Opposite, than how to promote the common Welfare. Thus they went on from lesser Animosities, to greater and incurable Divisions: And never stopp'd till they came to an open Hostility; and Sacrificed the *King*, the *Church*, and even the *Monarchy* its self, to their own private Quarrels, and Resentments.

This therefore was the next Step, towards the Murther of the *Royal Martyr*: And when Parties, and Divisions prevail in any Kingdom, it is much to be feared that somewhat like this will be but too apt to become the Result of them, unless a seasonable stop be put to them. But I must proceed yet farther. For,

3^{dly}, “ In all such States, where, by the *Constitution of the Government*, the *People have*
“ *a Share in the Legislature*, and must be called in
“ *to assist, and advise the King*, in the *Great and*
“ *Arduous Affairs of the Realm*; it is evident, that
“ *to secure the Peace, and Prosperity, of the King-*
“ *dom*, those who are chosen to act as their *Re-*
“ *presentatives*, should be Men of Uprightness
“ *and Integrity*; of Prudence and Impartiality;
“ *of Temper and Moderation*: Such as will be
“ *likely seriously to consider the Interest of the*
“ *Nation*; and constantly to pursue what may
“ *make for the lasting Quiet, and Establishment*
“ *of it.*

In these as the highest Trust is reposed, so the publick Happiness must, for that reason, depend very much upon their wise Conduct of themselves, in the Affairs that are to be transacted by them. All others, the Prince himself not excepted, Act within the Limits of the Laws establish'd. They can do nothing at all, or nothing that will be of any Legal Force, which those Laws do not warrant. But to this Council, acting with the Prince at the Head of it, the very Laws themselves are subject. They can alter, or repeal them; enlarge their Power, or limit their Extent, as shall seem good to them. Here then it is that the Nation is capable of being the most sensibly affected; and to have more good, or harm, done it, than by any other Court, or Council, besides.

It is therefore a Matter of the utmost Importance to the publick Peace and Welfare, that this great Assembly should be well and wisely constituted. And yet when *Divisions* abound in any *Kingdom*, it is scarce to be imagined how they can be prevented from spreading their Contagion into that Council, which is to be formed out of those very Persons who are so divided. Every Party, and Faction, will strive to encrease the Number of their own Friends in it: And those, on every side, be thought the fittest to be sent to it, not who are the most Wise, or Upright, or Moderate, or Peaceable; but who will be the most forward to stickle for their several particular Interests; and to be the most Warm, and Implacable, against all that oppose them. And when

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such Persons meet together, they will bring these Impressions along with them; and Act more according to such Measures as their own Friends, or party or private Interests, require, than to those which make for the publick Good.

How fatal this effect of our *own Divisions* was in the Reign of our *Royal Martyr*, both to the Welfare of our Realm, and the Life of that Great Prince, I shall not need to inform you. It is well known that here the Fire was kindled, which in a few Years consumed the whole Kingdom. I cannot indeed say that the *Parliament* began the War, because it is certain a *good part of the Parliament* had left *both the Houses* when the War began. But the Heats, and Animosities; the new Principles both of Law and Policy, which were countenanced, and sent abroad by those who still called themselves by that Name, and at the beginning had undoubtedly a right to it, inflamed the Nation; widen'd our Breaches; and prepared all things for that unjustifiable War, into which the Remainder of it, under the *Title of the Parliament*, openly enter'd; and maintain'd by Force, and Violence, against their King.

There is yet one thing remaining, without which though *Divisions* may do much; yet they cannot finish their Work; nor reduce a *Kingdom* to *utter Desolation*: For,

4^{thly}, " Whilst the *Body of the People* are well disposed; whilst they love their *Governors*,
" and desire to live *peaceably under them* in

“ *all Godliness and Honesty*; tho’ an ill Ministry and divided Interests, and Affections, in a Realm, may very much disorder the State of it, yet they cannot bring things to that Extremity of which we are now speaking”. But alas! How can this be expected when a *Kingdom is divided against its self*; and the whole, or the greater part of the People, are drawn into the Quarrel, and engaged on one side, or other, in it? We all know how easy the Populacy are to be managed; and with what dexterity Cunning Men do sometimes seduce them, without all Reason, to follow those whom they have set up to lead them. Liberty and Property, but much more Conscience, and Religion, are such powerful Motives, and carry such a Weight with them, that the very pretence of them is enough to persuade whole Multitudes to do any thing for the sake of them. And when once these come to be represented not as they ought to be, but as it is for the Interest, and Advantage, of designing Men to do it; what can be expected but that the Body of the People should be misled; and become zealous, and even furious, they know not why: And perhaps at length Sacrifice that very Liberty, and Property, Conscience and Religion, which they were so earnest to preserve, to their own unreasonable Fears, or Resentments.

Thus it was in our *Civil War*; and by this we came up to that height of Wickedness, and Misery, which we now in our cooler Hours, so justly bewail and condemn. Some extraordinary,
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and perhaps *arbitrary Proceedings*, there had been in the *Administration* of the *Civil Government*: And, in the business of *Religion*, Matters were carried tho' with a well meant Zeal, yet (the difficulties of the Time, and Tempers of Men, consider'd) to an imprudent, if not an immoderate height. On the one side *Popery*, or rather *Papists*, and *Arminianism*; *High Conformity*, and *Exorbitant Principles of Power*, and *Obedience*, were favour'd and encourag'd. On the other, it was accounted a matter of Conscience to allow of nothing but rigid *Calvinism*, and the *loosest Principles in Matter of Government*. Our *Episcopacy*, and the *Liturgy*, by Law Establish'd, were thought no better than the *Remainders of Popery*: *Ecclesiastical Canons*, and *Constitutions*, were declared to be Illegal, tho' confirmed by the Royal Authority, without the Consent of Parliament. And if a Minister were but known to be a Friend to any of these, it was enough to render him, (in the Language of those Times,) a *scandalous Minister*; and, which was yet more, to justify the treating of him as a Malignant.

On the one side, Errors were committed, and it ought not to be deny'd, in some extraordinary Methods of *Raising Money*; in the too extended Proceedings of the *Council-Board*, and *Star-Chamber*; perhaps in a few more particulars. On the other side, such Liberties were taken, when they grew strong enough for it, as never any People, or Parliament, pretended to before. Wit-

ness the *tumultuary Violence* that was used to carry whatever the Faction aimed at in *Parliament*. The *Bishops*, who had ever been a *Part* of that *Great Council*, and by our Constitution make up the *first*, and *chiefest Estate* of the *Clergy* in it, were by an express Act deprived of their Places, and Votes, there. The *Militia*, without so much as an Act to justify it, was taken out of the King's Hands: The *Fleet* seized; the *Garrisons* shut up, and arm'd, against him: And all this was done by those very Men, who had been so affected with the fears of *Arbitrary Government* before; and could not endure the least shadow of it in the King, or his Ministers.

By these Methods was our unhappy Nation entirely broken in pieces. All Reverence was lost for the *Prince* on the one hand, and for the *Parliament* on the other. Mens Tempers were sour'd; their Passions rais'd; their Heat and Fury (by some mis-called Zeal,) suffered to run beyond all Bounds: And then the War broke out, which overthrew all our Foundations; and finally exposed us to the Sin, and Scandal, of *Murdering our own King*.

Thus was the *Royal Martyr* sacrificed to the Violent, Arbitrary, and Unchristian Fury, of Wicked and Blood-thirsty Men. These were the Methods which brought on at once both his, and our Kingdom's Ruin. Fears and Jealousies, rais'd and improved by the Artifice of a few cunning, and discontented Persons, first divided us into several opposite Parties, and Interests. These strengthened

strengthened themselves, and increased, till they became Great, and Powerful. The unhappy Contagion overspread the whole Realm. The Court; the Parliament; the Church; the People; all were infected by it. And still as the Breach grew wider, Men's Animosities became more furious and irreconcilable. Till, at last, the whole study and endeavour on every side seemed to be, which should do most to oppose, or subdue the other; and the Effect was, that in the End they destroyed all.

So fully, but withal so fatally, was the Remark of our *Saviour* verified in our Confusions, that a *Kingdom divided against its self, is brought to Desolation!* Every Degree of *Publick Divisions* is one Step towards the *Publick Ruine*. As the former increase, the latter naturally follows: And, unless a timely stop be put to them, no sooner shall the *Divisions* of any People come to their full heighth, but the *Desolation* of that People will inevitably follow thereupon.

But is this all we are to do in pursuance of the Duty of this Solemnity? Will it be sufficient to answer the pious Design of it, that we meet together, and recount the Story of this black Tragedy; and, like the *Pharisees* heretofore, condemn the Proceedings of our Fathers, and say, that *if we had lived in their Days, we would not have done such things*; and so lay aside all

* Mat. xxiii. 30.

farther Thoughts of this Matter, till the next Return of this melancholy Season?

No certainly: This will neither secure our publick Peace, nor expiate the guilt of that Blood which this great Wickedness has brought upon us. But we must so consider this Parricide, as at once both to *raise up in our Souls a hearty Repentance for it*; and to *confirm our Resolutions* never more to *engage in any Methods, that may be likely to expose us to any such Sin, for the time to come*. This therefore is the *Improvement*, which I shall beg leave briefly to make of the foregoing Observations; and so I shall have done.

(1st.) We should in such wise consider this Great Wickedness, as to *raise up in our Souls a hearty Repentance for it*.

This may be accounted a very Needless, perhaps an improper *Improvement*, with respect to the most of us here present; who had neither any Hand, nor Counsel, in the *Sin*, and therefore, one would think, should not be called to *Repentance* for it. But let us not deceive our selves: Our Country has been defiled with this Royal Blood; and that must be cleansed by a National Sorrow and Repentance. And we, as Members of it, must join in the Humiliation, that so we may escape the Judgment of God, when he shall make Inquisition for it.

It was the Command of God to the *Jews* heretofore, that if a Man were found slain in the Land,
and

and it was not known who had slain him; the Elders of the City which was nearest to the Place where he was found, should take a Heiffer, and kill him, and wash their Hands over his Head, and say; ^b *Our Hands have not shed this Blood, neither have our Eyes seen it: Be merciful, O LORD! unto thy People Israel whom thou hast redeemed; and lay not innocent Blood unto thy People of Israel's Charge.*

If thus much were required to clear a City of the casual Murder of an ordinary Person, which they knew nothing of, neither had any hand in it; let us not think that the solemn, premeditated Parricide, of a Sovereign Prince, transacted in a Form of Justice, and by a pretence of publick Authority, can be attoned for by any thing less than the publick Repentance, and Deprecation, of the whole Realm: Or that we, who, by God's Blessing, had no personal concern in the Shedding of this Blood, ought not yet as Members of the same Realm, openly to declare our Detestation of it; and to implore God's Pardon for our Land, which I fear is still defiled by it.

This therefore we all should do, and I am persuaded we have all of us heartily done it this Day. As for the other thing proposed for the better *Improvement* of this Solemnity,

(2^{dly}.) That the Consideration of what was then done, should *make us the more careful not*

^b Deut. xxi. 8.

to engage in any Methods that may endanger our falling into the like Guilt hereafter;

Both our Duty, and our Interest, require it of us: And if we are indeed so truly affected, as we ought to be, with the Memory of this great Crime, we shall not need to be much excited to it. We have seen from what small Beginnings this great Evil, and Desolation, came upon us: O let this be a lasting Caution to us, not to give way to any such Discontents, the Effects whereof have been once already so fatally Destructive, as well as Dishonourable, to us!

In Matters of publick Administration, Errors will sometimes be committed: Offences will be given, or at least will be taken; and Causes of Complaint arise to many Persons. Thus it has always been; and such is the imperfect State of things in this World, that thus, in some Measure, it will always be. Let this teach us to make a due allowance for such Miscarriages as can never be totally avoided: And engage us, if at any time they should happen, not to carry our Resentments of them farther than is consistent with the publick Peace.

But especially, let not any tolerable Excesses in the Government, (should any such be hereafter committed, as in the time of this Unfortunate Prince we are told there were;) transport us into an ill Opinion of, or Indignation against, our Royal Sovereign; or provoke us to any undutiful Returns for them. It is a just, as well as wise

Maxim

Maxim of our Law: *That the Prince can do no Wrong.* He Acts by the Counsel, and Ministry, of others; and is always to be presumed to design every thing for the best. Those therefore who give any Counsel, or execute any Commands, which are not lawful, or expedient for the publick Good, must answer for what they advise, and do: But the Person of the Prince is Sacred, and Inviolable; nor ^c *can any one touch the Lords Anointed, and be guiltless.*

Nay but farther; not only the *Persons* of Princes certainly are, but their *Honour* too ought to be Sacred. The Safety of the Realm depends upon it; which will then be always the most effectually secured, when the People have a high Esteem of the Justice, and Integrity of their Rulers: And do truly believe, what they should always suppose, that however they may sometimes chance to be Mistaken, or Mis-led, yet they mean well; and evermore design to act so, as may the most conduce to the publick Good.

I hope I shall not be so far Mis understood in what I am now speaking, as if I intended thereby to insinuate, that any Excesses *had been* committed, by the present Government; or were *hereafter likely to be* committed. On the contrary, I am persuaded, that as no Prince has ever been more careful to employ his Royal Authority to the good of his People, than his Majesty has

been; and to regulate his Power by the strictest Measures of our Establish'd Laws and Constitution; so there never will be any thing attempted, or done, by his Knowledge, or with his Consent, contrary thereunto. But should the Case be otherwise, as in the time of the Royal Martyr it has been pretended; yet still Rebellion is the worst Method that any People can take, to rectify the Errors, or Abuses, of Government: And any tolerable Excesses should rather be born, than to bring things to such an Extremity as must probably end in the utter Destruction both of our Liberties, and our Religion.

To all which, let us add, finally, our utmost Care not to fall into any *Divisions* among *ourselves*; which tho', like *Elijah's* Cloud, they should appear no bigger than a *Man's Hand* at the first, may yet, before we are aware, overspread our whole Hemisphere with Horror, and Darkness; and break upon us with such a Storm as may destroy us all. ^d*The beginning of Strife*, says the wise Man, *is as when one letteth out Water*: When once the Bank is thrown down that should keep it within its Channel, we cannot tell whither it will go, or how far it may prevail. At first perhaps it will spread gently about; but it will still encrease both in its Breadth and Violence; till at length it carries all before it, and

^d Prov. xvii. 14.

swallows up the whole Country in a general Inundation.

And when things are come to such a pass, who can tell what Wickedness, or Miseries, may ensue upon it?

I verily believe there were few, if any, of those who first began our own Troubles, that thought of entering into a Civil War; much less of subverting the Church; of changing our ancient Monarchy into a popular State; and of making way for both by the Murther of the King. Should any such villanous Design have been suggested to the fiercest amongst them, I doubt not but he would have rejected it with the same Indignation that *Hazael* did the like Prediction of the Prophet, 2 Kings viii. 13. *What, is thy Servant a Dog that he should do such things?* Yet these things as detestable as they truly were, and they themselves at the beginning would have accounted them to be, those very Men in the end did do: And should we ever suffer our *Divisions* to rise again to the like exorbitant height they heretofore did, God knows what new Wickedness may be the Result of them. Sure I am, our only Safety consists in the resisting of the first Beginnings of such Disorders; which is much more easy, as well as more Christian, than to proceed with Temper, and Moderation, in them.

There is great Reason to believe, howsoever they seemed to act above-board, that our old,
inve-

inveterate Enemies, the *Papists*, were at the bottom of all the Wickedness that was heretofore committed; and, particularly, drove on the Murther of the King. We all know what Credit they had in the Court of that Prince. They appeared openly and insolently, in the Exercise of their Religion; and had but too much Protection given them against the Penalties of the Law in what they did.

When the last Parliament met, which began our Confusions, we are assured by one who was the best able to inform us of the Transactions of those Times, that the *French Ambassador* was very active against the King in it. It was the *Queen*, who by the Advice of her *Priests*, and at the Instigation of the *French Court*, persuaded his Majesty to consent that the *Bishops should be turned out of the Parliament*. From other undoubted Relations, we are informed, how far they were concern'd in the *Tumults of Scotland*; the first Foundation of our own War. That the *Priests* then preach'd in a *Puritan Dress*: Railed at *Episcopacy*; defended the *Covenant*; and had their *Licences*, and *Indulgences*, granted them so to do. That when our Wars broke out, they divided themselves into the *Two Armies*, and kept a constant Correspondence with one another: And the Year before the King was Beheaded, held a great Consult about cutting off his Majesty, and changing the Government; and sent Dispatches to *Rome* for Direction in that Particular

ricular. Of all this, and much more that might be added, we have good Proofs; and may I think from hence learn whom we are to thank for this *barbarous Murther*; as we well know upon whose *Principles* those went who were the Actors in it.

I shall not offer any Arguments to convince you that the same Politicians are now again at Work; and would be very glad, if they were able, to bring us again to the like Ruine and Confusion. The Proofs of it are too open, as well as too plain, to be doubted of by any. Could they but manage the Discontents they have artificially raised among us, with such Success, as to remove our *King*, and his *Royal Family* (whom God preserve against all their Devices!) They have one ready at hand to supply his Place: And it would be a double Triumph, and Satisfaction, to them, to Reproach, and Ruine us, at the same time.

O let this engage us to be the more careful both to establish our selves, and to disappoint them! Let it unite us in a hearty, and vigorous, Prosecution of all such Measures as make for our Peace, and for the better Security of our Reformed Religion, and Government. Wheresoever we see any Persons (be their Characters, or Pretences, what they will,) offer at any thing which may be apt either to *divide us among our selves*, or to *favour the Designs of*
our

our common Enemies, let us ^c *Mark those Men and avoid them.* Let us account of them as no other than Popish Emissaries; Adversaries both to the Religion, and Welfare, of their Country.

This will, by God's Blessing, soon restore Peace and Prosperity to our Kingdom: Will settle the Throne; secure our Rights, and Liberties; and enable us to defy all the Power, and Malice, of our Enemies. It will shew us to have a just Sense of our past Miscarriages; and keep us from falling any more into the like Evils. Instead of that *Desolation* which attends a *Kingdom divided against its self*, it will make us like *David's Jerusalem*, a *People Compact together*. And the Consequence of that I cannot better deliver, than in the Words of that Holy Prophet, *Psal. cxxii. 6. They shall prosper that love us. Peace shall be within our Walls, and Prosperity within our Palaces.* The Vows, and Prayers, of all that wish well to the Protestant Interest, whether here, or abroad, shall follow us; *For their Brethrens and Companions sake they shall say, Peace be within thee.* And their Counsel and Assistance, shall always be ready to help and defend us: Yea, *Because of the House of the LORD our God, they will seek to do us Good.*

^c Rom. xvi. 17.

*May the God of Peace, who brought again
from the Dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that
Great Shepherd of the Sheep, make us
perfect in Peace, and in every Good
Work; Stablish, Strengthen, Settle us:
To him be Glory and Dominion for ever
and ever. Amen.*



S E R M O N XII.

Preach'd before the

K I N G

I N

St. J A M E S's Chapel,

Upon *Palm-Sunday*, March 22. 1718.

HEBREWS X. 31.

*It is a fearful thing to fall into the Hands
of the Living God.*



WHEN *David* commanded *Joab* to number his People, and God being offended at his Presumption, sent a *Prophet* to him, to offer him his choice of *three Things* for the Punishment of it; that he should either suffer seven Years Famine; or flee three Months before his

^a 2 Sam. xxiv.

Enemies; or have three Days Pestilence rage in his Land; the Holy Man being return'd to himself, and sorrowful for what he had done, soon resolved what choice to make; *Let us fall*, says he, *into the hand of the LORD, for his Mercies are great*^b: And the Result was, that the LORD sent a Pestilence upon Israel; and there died of the People, in about nine Hours time, *seventy thousand Men*.

If such be the case of the Penitent Sinners *falling into the Hands of God*; if the Single slip, and that none of the most heinous, of such an excellent Person, could not be expiated by any lesser Sacrifice than the Lives of seventy thousand of his Subjects; tho' *confess'd, bewail'd, repented* of, by him; and that *now*, in this *present time*, while there is yet space for *Mercy and Forgiveness*: What may we justly fear shall be the Punishment of the *Ungodly and Impenitent*; of *Habitual and hardened Sinners*; when the Day of Salvation shall be past, and there shall be *nothing remaining*^c *but a certain fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which shall devour the Adversaries*?^d *If the Righteous scarcely shall be saved, where shall the Ungodly and Sinner appear*? 'Tis a Reflection that will surely deserve our most serious Consideration; and I know no Time more proper than this, to press it upon you.

^b N. 14.

^c Heb. x. 27.

^d 1 Petr. iv. 18.

It is the design of our present Discourses not so much to *instruct*, as to *persuade*; to excite you to a zealous Discharge of what you know to be your Duty, rather than to teach you, *what is good, and what the Lord your God requires of you^e*. To intreat, beseech, exhort you, as the *Ambassadors of Christ*, that you would *be reconciled unto God^f*; or rather would now, in this solemn Season, dedicated by the Church to this very Purpose, so Think, Consider, and Repent, that *God for Christ's sake may be reconciled unto you*. This is one of the Ends for which we are now assembled; and I do not know, how I could more effectually dispose you *to do this*, than by representing to you, the fatal Consequence of your *not doing of it*. For though some there may be of such a *Reprobate Mind*, that neither the *Love of God*, nor the *Sense of their Duty*, can move them to forsake their Sins, yet I can hardly think there are any so far *hardned*, as not to be afraid of being *Damned* for them. The *Terrors of the Lord* will *persuade*, even when his *Goodness* cannot: And the *Danger of Hell* drive those to Repentance, whom the *Hope of Heaven* would never have drawn to it.

Here then let the Careless and Unthoughtful Christian; let the busy and covetous Worldling; the sensual Voluptuary; the profane Libertine; the proud Scoffer; every obstinate and impenitent Sinner; stop a while, and consider what shall be

^e Deut. x. 12.^f 2 Cor. v. 20.^h 2 Cor. v. 11.

the Consequence of his *Negligence* and *Irreligion*. And if upon the Enquiry it shall appear,

First, That the *Punishment* of our *Evil doings* shall be *great, and insupportable*; beyond Measure, and without End: And,

Secondly, That there is no way of *escaping* this *Vengeance*, but by a *present, hearty, entire, Renuntiation* of *all our Sins*; let us then be persuaded, while there is yet Hope of Forgiveness, to *turn from our Impieties*, that so we may not fall under the *Condemnation* of them.

This was the *Use*, which the *Apostle* made of this *Reflection* in the *Words* before us; and the same is the *Improvement* which I now purpose, by God's Assistance, to make of them. And

First, Let us consider the astonishing *Greatness*, and *Terror*, of God's *future Vengeance*; and of the *Punishment* of our *Evil doings*.

But how to represent either the *Greatness*, or *Terrour*, of it, as it deserves, I cannot tell: No *Words* can express it, no *Thoughts* can comprehend it. The *Holy Scriptures* have indeed given us some *Allusions*, by which we may be let into an *imperfect Apprehension* of it: They tell us of a *Worm that shall never die*; and of *Fire that shall never be quenched*: Of a place of *Darkness*

and *Distress*, where *there*^k *shall be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth*. But still the Particulars of this *Punishment* are, in great measure, unknown to us; and all we can say with respect to this part of the *Future State*, as well as the *other*, is but this; *That it doth not yet appear what we shall be*^l. However I will take such a View, as I am able to do, of it: I will represent it to you so far as God has thought fit to *reveal* it to us. And even that will be more than enough, to shew, how much it will concern every one of us, to use his utmost diligence to escape it; and force us to confess, with the *Apostle* in the *Text*, that *it is indeed a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God*.

For (1st) It is certain, that God both *observes* all that we *do now*, and will assuredly *call us to an Account* for it *hereafter*. He will bring every *Work* into *Judgment*, with every *secret thing*; whether it be *Good*, or whether it be *Evil*. Eccles. xii. 14.

Here Men may *Sin* with a *Hope* of *Impunity*: Many Crimes there are, which fall not under the *Capacity* of any *Humane Cognizance*. They lie hid within the *Hearts* of those who *commit* them; and therefore as they are not *known* to *Man*, so neither can they be *punished* by *Man*. And even of those which *do appear*, yet some are not taken notice of by the *Civil Magistrate*. *Humane Laws*, for the most part, look no farther than

* Matt. xxiv. 51. xxv. 30.

^l 1 Joh. iii. 2.

to the *Ends* of *publick Peace* and *Security*. Where these are not concern'd, neither are *Men's Actions* wont to be restrain'd by them. He therefore who *offends* within these *Bounds*, *Sins* *securely*, as to any danger of *Humane Punishment*; which either *cannot reach*, or *does not meddle* with, such *Transgressions*.

Nay, or should Men be so daring as to go beyond these *Bounds*, yet still they *may offend*, and yet not run any *great Hazard*, by what they do. Some are so *Wary*, that tho' the *Evil* they commit be *known*, and perhaps *felt too*, yet the *Authors* of it, are not to be discover'd. A *violent Suspicion* may point them out to us, and guide us to the Persons from *whom* the *Calamity* springs. But the *Law* condemns none upon such kind of *Proof*: There must be a *better Evidence* for that to *proceed* upon. And thus the *Politick Sinner* lies close and secure from any *Humane Punishment*; not because he does not *deserve* it, but because the *Law* is *Impotent*, and cannot tell how to *bring* him to it.

Others, tho' not so cunning to *conceal* their *Crimes*, yet find Means to *escape* the *Punishment* of them. Either a *timely flight* preserves them from *Judgment*; or *favour* and *corruption* supports them in it. Or should the *Prosecution* go on, and *Judgment* be given against an *Offender*, yet still *Friends* and *Interest* may prevent the *Execution* of it; and the *Malefactor* be *saved*, tho' the *Law* has done its part to *condemn* him.

In a word: Many there are, who are *too big* for *Humane Justice* to meddle with: They *Sin* with a *high Hand*, and fear not to be called to any *present Account* for what they do.

Now all these Circumstances very much lessen the *Terror* of *falling into the Hands of Men*; and encourage Offenders to *act wickedly* without any great Fear of what shall be the Consequence of their Evil Doings.

But there is no *such Hope* with Respect to God. We can neither *conceal* our *Sins* from *Him*, that *He* should not *know* whatsoever we *do amiss*; nor can we find out any means to *escape His Vengeance* for them. With *Him* neither *Cunning*, nor *Secrecy*, avail any thing. *He* looks through all our fair Appearances, and sees as well the *Inward depravity* of our *Hearts*, as the *open Malignity* of our *Outward Actions*. There is none so *small* as to *escape His Knowledge*; nor any so *great* as to be *above His Judgment*. The *crowned Head* shall as certainly be called to account by *Him*, as the *meanest Subject*; and if *He* has done Evil, shall as certainly be *punished* too. For, *we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ*, 2 Cor. v. 10. And, *There is no Respect of Persons with God*, Rom. ii. 11.

Let this then be our first Consideration to shew, how *fearful a thing it is to fall into the Hands of the Living God*; that *He* observes all our *Actions* now, and will *bring us to Judgment* for *them* hereafter. And *how soon* *He* may do so, we cannot tell. This we are sure, that however
wicked

wicked Men may put the *Day* of their *Retribution* at a great distance from them, *their Damnation* slumbereth not. 2 Pet. ii. 3. *Yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry*, Hebr. x. 37.

This therefore is the next Circumstance, which I would offer (2^{dly}) to convince you of the *Terror*, as well as *Danger*, of falling into *God's Hands*: *When Men shall say, Peace and Safety, then Destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a Woman with Child, and they shall not escape*, 1 Thes. v. 3. *For the Day of the Lord so cometh as a Thief in the Night*, 2 Pet. iii. 10. It will give no warning to any: But as it was in the *Days of Noah*; they did *Eat*, they *Drank*, they *married*, and were given in *Marriage*, till the *Day* that *Noah* entred into the *Ark*, and knew not until the *Flood* came, and took them all away. So also shall the *Coming of the Son of Man* be. Mat. xxiv. 38, 39.

O dreadful Day! O terrible uncertainty of wicked and impenitent Sinners! Who would not fear to live at such a Hazard? To commit those Crimes to day, for which he cannot tell but he may be *condemn'd* to *Hell-fire* to morrow.

But to suppose that the *Day of Judgment* should be truly at as great a distance as *Evil Men* are wont to set it from them^m; that *the End is not yet*; nor are we the *last Generation* that shall come into the *World*: Yet still there is

^m Mat. xxiv. 6.

another Day, the Day of Death, which cannot be far off from any of us; and that is much the same thing, as to all the Effects of what I am now speaking. And who knows how near that Day may be to him? What Accidents may befall him? What Dangers may hang over his Head? The Rich Worldling, in S. Luke, was Lusty and Strong; his Pulse beat well, his Heart was chearful, and his Health vigorous. He had store laid up for many Tears; and he made no question, but that he had also many Tears of Life to come, to Revel and Rejoyce in the Enjoyment of it. Yet in the midst of all this Plenty and Security, the Sentence of God went forth against him; Thou Fool, this Night shall thy Soul be required of thee, and then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? Luke xii. 20.

Thus fell that Rich, unthinking Sinner: And thus may every other the like negligent and careless Sinner, for ought he knows, fall also. And surely then we ought to tremble, when we consider, how grievously we have provoked God's Vengeance; and how soon we *may be called* to undergo the Stroke of it.

Or should we allow even this also, that not only the Day of the *general Judgment*, but of our own *Death*, should be at a greater distance; yet still God does not want Means to anticipate his *final Vengeance*, and to bring wicked Men to Punishment even *Now*, in this *present Time*; and I need not say how signally he has some-
times

times done it. What *Stings* and *Terrors* of *Conscience* have some fallen under? What *black despair* has seized the *Minds* and *Hearts* of others? How have some been judicially *hardened* in their *Sins*? What an astonishing *Vengeance* has pursued the *Persons*, the *Fortunes*, the *Families*, of others? The *Histories* of all *Ages* and *Countries* are full of *Instances* of some or other of these; and our *own Nation*, and our *own Times*, have not wanted *Examples* of the terrible "*Wrath of God against the Children of Disobedience*."

But however, to grant all that can be desired in this Case; that *Sinners* could be sure to pass their whole *Lives* without any such *Calamities*, and to continue on in *Ease*, and *Plenty*, and *Prosperity*, to the very last. Yet alas! What is there in that short Period of what we call *Life*, that can justly be accounted *Long*, when *Eternity* is to follow after? In Comparison whereof a *thousand Years* are but as *Yesterday*; they pass away as a *Watch in the Night*, Psal. xc. 4. *Yet a little, while*°, and we are gone, and our place knows us no more: But the *Punishment* of what we now do shall *endure for ever*, and of God's *Vengeance* there shall be no *End*.

This therefore is another, and a great *Aggravation* it is, of the *Danger* of *falling into the Hands of the Living God*; that His *Judgment* is as near, as it is *Certain*: It will infallibly overtake us in

° Ephes. v. 6.

° Psal. ciii. 16.

the End, and we cannot tell, *how soon it may do so.*

And these are yet but the beginnings of those *Horrors*, of which our *Text* speaks: They rather prepare us for them, than enter into the Composition of them. Our next Circumstance will carry us still farther, and shew more plainly, *how fearful a thing it is, to fall into God's Hand*; And that is,

(3^{dly}.) The Consideration of the *vast Extent of his Judgment*; which reaches to *all Persons*, and to *all kinds of Sin*; so that there is nothing, that we either *think, speak, or do*, but what shall come under the Cognizance of it.

First, It reaches to *all Persons*, whether they be *Great or Small, Honourable or Dishonourable*; *All shall stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ, and Every one receive the Things done in the Body, according to that he shall have done, whether it be Good or Bad*, 2 Cor. v. 10.

O the Majesty and Terror of that Great Day! When the *P Son of Man* shall come in the Clouds of Heaven with his Holy Angels, and sit upon the Throne of his Glory! When the Trumpet shall sound, and the Graves shall give up their Dead, and all that are therein shall hear his Voice, and come forth; they that have done well to the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done Evil to the Resurrection of Damnation. When being gather'd together from the four

Winds, from the one end of Heaven to the other, they shall all stand before their Great Judge, ready to receive their last, irrevocable Sentence; which shall either Crown them with everlasting Glory and Happiness in Heaven, or condemn them to everlasting Shame and Torments in Hell!

Who can express the *Fear* and the *Astonishment*; the *Anguish* of Heart, and *Confusion* of Face, which will then overwhelm the unhappy Sinner, and hasten his *Punishment* before the Time? How will he tremble at the *Presence* of his Lord, and the apprehension of his *Vengeance*? And begin, in vain, to *confess*, what he will not now be prevailed with to consider, that it is *a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God.*

But we must not stop here: We have brought the Sinner before the *Judgment Seat of Christ*: Let us consider, *Secondly*, How the *Inquest* shall proceed there? Shall he be judged only for his greater, and more *notorious Offences*? His *Profaneness* and *Infidelity*; his *Perjuries* and *Blasphemies*; his *Violence* and *Injustice*; his *Murders*, *Rapines*, *Adulteries*, *Fornications*, *Drunkenness*, *Pride*, *Malice*, *Envy*, *Variance*, *Strife*, *Seditions*, *Heresies* and the like Crimes? Or will God then call him to account for every the *least Sin* which he has committed? For the *Words* of his *Mouth*, and the *Thoughts* of his *Heart*, and the *Lusts* of his *Flesh*? For the *Omissions* of his *Duty*, as well as for his *Transgressions* against it?

it? Nay, for the *Imperfections* of his *Growth* in *Piety* and *Holiness*; for want of those *Attainments*, which he *might*, and *ought* to have made, in it? Yes, for *these*, for *all these things*, God *will bring us to Judgment*. The Declaration is general, and makes no Exception; *Mat. xvi. 27. When the Son of Man shall come in the Glory of his Father, with his holy Angels, then shall he reward every Man according to his Works.*

For to come to particulars; you have already heard, how our *Works* shall be inquired into: As for our *Words*, the Holy Scriptures are no less express: *Every idle Word that Men shall speak, here, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment. For by thy Words thou shalt be justified, or by thy Words thou shalt be condemned. Mat. xii. 36, 37. And again; whosoever shall say to his Brother, thou Fool, shall be in danger of Hell-Fire, Mat. v. 22.*

The same shall be the Case of our *Hearts* and *Affections*: ^a *He that looketh upon a Woman to lust after her, shall be condemn'd as an Adulterer;* ^b *He that hates his Brother, as a Murderer;* He that performs all the Parts of an outward *Piety*, but without an inward *Principle of Holiness and Sanctification*, as a *Hypocrite*. For ^c *the Righteous Lord trieth the very Hearts and Reins:* And, ^d *He will judge the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, according to his Gospel.*

^a S. *Mat. v. 28.*
^c *Rom. ii. 16.*

^b *Jo. iii. 15.*

^d *Psal. vii. 9.*

Nor shall our *Neglects* of *Duty* be then forgotten: *Every Tree that hath not brought forth good Fruit, shall be hewen down, and thrown into the Fire, Mat. iii. 19.* And the unprofitable *Servant* who hid his *Talent* in the *Ground*, and improv'd it not, shall be ^u cast into outer *Darkness*, where shall be weeping and gnashing of *Teeth*.

Nay the very *Scandal* we give to others, as well as the *Evil* we commit ourselves, shall be required of us; *S. Mat. ix. 42.* *Whosoever shall offend one of these little ones, that believe in me, it were better for him, that a Milstone were hanged about his Neck, and he were cast into the Sea.*

So strict, so particular, shall the final Inquest of God be. And then Blessed Lord! How fearful, how terrible a thing must it be, to fall into His Hands? For let us now but stop a little, and consider our own Ways; what Sins, what Omissions, what Follies and Vanities, what Imperfections we are guilty of every Day? How much Evil we commit? And how little Good we perform? And let us to this add, all the aggravating Circumstances of both: How many useful Instructions we have neglected? How many happy Opportunities we have let slip, of serving God, or being Charitable to our Neighbour? What checks of Conscience we have suppressed? What Motions of the Holy Spirit we have re-

^u S. Mat. xxv. 30.

sisted? And by what *base* and *scandalous Attractives* we have been often led away to Sin, in opposition to both? And when we have duly weighed all these, and computed the *Number* of the *Sins* we have committed, and the *Measure* of the *guilt* we have contracted, but for a *Week*, a *Month*, or a *Year*; and made a reasonable Allowance for the many Offences, that have *escaped* our *Enquiry* altogether; and the many *degrees* of *guilt* which we have not sufficiently attended to; let us then think, how intolerable our Account will be, when *all* the *Iniquity* of our *whole Lives*, shall be at once summ'd up against us; and we shall be required to answer for every the *least part* and *Circumstance* of it?

Great certainly will be our *Guilt*, nor will our *Punishment* be less *amazing*; and of which, tho' we cannot determine any thing particularly, yet thus much we are sure of; that it will extend to *both* the *parts* of us; our *Bodies*, as well as *Souls*; that it will be most *exquisite* in its *degree*; and *Eternal* in its *duration*.

This is the last Circumstance, which remains to be considered, (4^{thly}) To make up the complete Demonstration of what I am now proving; and is such as may alone suffice to convince us of the Truth of what the Apostle declares to us in the *Text*; That it is a *fearful thing* to *fall into the Hands of the Living God*.

1st, The *future Punishment* will extend to *both Parts* of us; to our *Bodies* as well as *Souls*; so our *Saviour* expressly declares, and for that Reason

reason requires us to be the more Sollicitous, not to fall under the Sentence of it. *Mat. x. 28.* *Fear not them which kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul; but rather fear Him, who is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. S. Luke xii. 5.*

Here we commonly suffer but in *Part* only: Our *Bodies* are *weak* and *painful*, but our *Souls* are *easy* and *comfortable*; and the *" Spirit* of the one *sustains the Infirmities* of the other. Or if through the *decays* of the *Flesh*, the *Mind* should chance to be *oppress'd*, and sink together with it; yet still we have the *Grace of God*, and the *Hope of Heaven*; the *Comforts* of a good *Conscience*, and the *Ministrations of Prayer*, and the *Holy Sacrament*, to renew its force, and restore it to a *State of Peace and Tranquillity*; or it may be, even of *Joy and Transport*. And then, the *Time* runs on, and either the *Distemper* goes off; or, if not, it overcomes the *Patient*, and puts an *End* both to his *Life* and *Sufferings* together.

But in the *other State* all will be quite contrary: There the *Fire* will at once *torment the Body*, and the *Worm* *distract and disquiet the Soul*: There will be all *Misery*, all *Despair*: No *Ease*, no *Comfort*, no *Hope of Refreshment*: Nothing to *support the unhappy Sinner* under his *Sufferings*. Wheresoever he looks, *all will be dark and gloomy* about him: He will be full of

w Prov. xviii. 14.

Horror and Anguish at the present, and without the least Prospect of any *Intermission* of, or release from, his *Miseries* hereafter.

Nor will the *future Punishment* of wicked Men, 2^{dly}, be more *Universal* in its *Extent*, than *extreme* in its *degree*. Both the *Pains* of the *Body*, and the *Anguish* of the *Mind*, will be the *greatest* that 'tis possible for either to *bear*: And we have reason to fear, they will then be enabled to bear much more than we can now either *express* or *conceive*.

If we look to the *Language* of the *Holy Scriptures*; Terrible is the Account which they every where give of these *future Sufferings*. They represent the *Day of Judgment* as a *Day of Fear* and *Horror*, and of *Perdition* of *Ungodly Men*. 2 Pet. iii. 7. They tell us that God will judge *righteously*, *without respect of Persons*, 1 Pet. i. 17. ii. 23. That for this End, the *Lord Jesus* shall be revealed from *Heaven* with his mighty *Angels*, in *flaming Fire*, taking *Vengeance* on them that know not God, and that obey not the *Gospel* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*. 2 Thes. i. 8. They speak of the *Punishment* to which *Sinners* shall be *condemned*, under the dreadful Expressions of the * *Wrath* to come; † of a *Worm* that *dieth not*, and the like. Of the *Place* to which they shall be sent, as of a ‡ *Furnace of Fire*:

* 3. Mat. iii. 7. Rom. ii. 8. 1 Thess. i. 10.

† Isa. lxvi. 24. Mark ix. 44.

‡ S. Mat. ix. 42, 50.

^a *A Lake of Fire and Brimstone.* The Result of all which, they tell us will be, ^b *Tribulation and Anguish to every Soul of Man that doth Evil; weeping and wailing and gnashing of Teeth; this shall be the Portion of Impenitent Sinners to all Eternity.*

It cannot be doubted, but that there must be somewhat very terrible in the future Punishment of wicked Men, that needs such a variety of *sad Expressions*, and *dreadful Similitudes*, to represent it to us. And so indeed our very Reason it self, if we enquire more particularly into the Nature of it, will convince us that it must needs be.

If we consider our *Bodies*, which shall then be *raised from the Dead*; how far God may think fit to *enlarge their Capacities* in that new State, and to fit them for a *quicker Sense*, and a *farther degree of Suffering*, than they are at present able to bear, I cannot tell. Nor will I undertake to affirm that the *Punishment* prepared for them shall be a *proper, material Fire*; tho' the Scriptures so often, and so expressly, assert it, that, I am sure, no one can upon any good Grounds affirm that it *shall not be so*. But if *Hell* shall be truly a *Furnace of Fire* (as it is at least probable that it shall be) and if *wicked Men* shall be *cast into it*, and *tormented in its Flames*;

^a Revel. xix. 20. xx. 10. 15. xxi. 8.

^b Rom. ii. 9. Mat. viii. 12. xiii. 42.

as both the *Sentence* of the future Judgment, Mat. xxv. 41. and the plain scope of that *Parable* of the *Rich Man* in St. Luke xvi. 24. seem to assure us that they shall: If lastly, by the infinite Power of God, that *Fire* shall torment, but not *consume* them; so that they shall still *live* in the *midst* of those *Burnings*; I shall then leave it to the Sinner to consider, what *Torment* can be *imagined*, or *represented* more Terrible (as to the *Body*) than such a *Punishment* as this must needs be.

If we regard our *Souls* (of the future *Sufferings* of which we are better able to judge) what can be conceived more exceedingly tormenting than what they shall endure? *Pain* above *Patience*; *Sorrows* without *Ease*; *Amazement* without *Consideration*; *Despair* without the *Intervals* of any *Hope*; *Indignation* without the *Possession* of any *Good*. And all these not in those little *Degrees* and *Proportions* we are here acquainted with, but in such *Measures* as shall be suitable to our *enlarged Capacities*; to the State of the *Soul*, which it shall then have, not to that in which it now lives.

To *desire earnestly*, and at the same time be in *despair* of attaining what we the most vehemently *Long after*; to *fear beyond Measure*, and yet have no hope of *avoiding* what we are *afraid of*; to be in *Misery* above what we know, how to *bear*, and that without *any* the most di-

stant Prospect of ever being *delivered* from it; to *love* no body, nor have *Comfort* in *any thing*; to be perpetually *reflecting* on the *Good* we might have *enjoy'd*, and the *Folly* of *loosing* it, and the *Impossibility* of ever *recovering* it; and to aggravate this with the contrary Considerations of the *Evils* we *suffer*, of the *Trifles* for *which* we *sell* under them, and the like *Impossibility* of ever being *freed* from them: To be continually *cut* and *torn* in pieces with these, and the like *bitter Remembrances*; what *Tongue* can *express* the *Anguish*, what *Thought* can ever *reach* the *Misery* of it?

Let me add yet more; to be not only thus *tormented* in *Body*, and *distracted* in *Mind*, but to suffer all this in such a *Place* as *Hell*, and with such *Company* as *Devils*, and *Men* almost as *bad* as *they*; to dwell for ever in a *Society* where there shall be nothing but *Envy*, and *Malice*, and *Hatred* of *God*, and of *one another*; every thing to *amaze*, but nothing to *cheer* or *comfort* the *unhappy Sufferer*; this must be to add still more *Horror* to the *Miseries* of that wretched *State*, and make *Damnation* it self more terrible and intolerable

And now there is but one *Circumstance* more, that can be added to increase the *Agonies* of the *future Punishment*; and that is 3^{dly}, That all these *Sufferings*, which I have before-mentioned, shall be *Continual*, and *Eternal*; without *Intermission* and without *End*. And this both the *Nature* of the *Punishment* its self shews, and the *Holy Scrip-*

tures expressly declare to us. They call the ^d *Fire unquenchable*: They tell us, that the ^e *wicked shall be tormented in it for ever and ever*. They ask, and in that they do but the more plainly affirm, what shall hereafter be the Case of such Persons; ^f *Who can dwell with everlasting Burnings?* They inform us, that the ^g *Worm* (those *Stings of Conscience*, and that *Anguish of Mind*, I before described to you) shall *never die*: And by all this they shall plainly assure us, that the *Sufferings*, as well as *Punishment*, of the *damned* shall be *Everlasting*; that those wretched Men shall *never cease to be*, nor ever *cease to be miserable*, to all Eternity.

But 'tis time for me to have done with this *melancholy Subject*; and of which how imperfectly soever I may have spoken to you, yet I cannot but Hope, I must have said more than enough to convince you, that *It will be indeed a fearful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God*. Oh! that you would so *seriously consider these Terrors of the Lord*, as to do what in you lies to *avoid* them! That you would so *heartily repent* of, and so *entirely forsake*, your Sins now, that they may not be *required of you hereafter*. This, as it was the *great End* for which I have here endeavour'd to *Reason with you of Righteousness*, and the *Judgment to come*, and to let this part of the *future State* before you; so is it the other point, I propos'd

^d Mat. iii. 13. Mark ix. 44.

^e Revel. xiv. 11.

^f Isa. xxxiii. 14.

^g Mark ix. 44.

Secondly,

Secondly, To touch upon, as both the proper Business of the *present Season*; and the best, and most natural *Improvement*, of the *foregoing Discourse*.

Now that *Repentance* and *Conversion*, are the only means, which the *Gospel* proposes to us, to enable us either to *escape* all this *Misery*, or to *attain* to the opposite State of *Glory* and *Happiness in Christ's Kingdom*, is a Truth so *evident*, as well as *certain*, that I shall not need to say any thing to convince you of it. Give me leave rather, for your greater *Encouragement* thereunto, briefly to offer these Four Things to your Consideration.

1st, With what a passionate *Concern*, with what an affectionate *Earnestness*, God is pleased to *invite* us to Pardon, and Reconciliation? What *Expressions* we every where meet with, of His *tender Compassions* towards us? How *unwilling* He is, that *any of us should perish*? How *desirous* that *we should* ^h *all come to Repentance*? *As I live saith the Lord God, I desire not the Death of a Sinner, but that he should turn from his Sin and be saved: Turn ye, turn ye from your Evil Ways, for why will ye die, O House Israel.*

2^{dly}, That there are no *Sins* so great, nor any *Sinners* so desperate, to whom God does not

^h 2 Pet. iii. 9.

ⁱ Ezek. xviii. 32. xxxiii. 11.

freely extend these Offers of Favour and Forgiveness. How deplorable was the State of the *Jewish People* in the time of *Isaiah*? ^k *Ab! sinful Nation; a People laden with Iniquity; a Seed of Evil-doers, Children that are Corrupters; they have forsaken the Lord; they have provoked the Holy one of Israel unto Anger; they are gone away backward. The whole Head is sick, and the whole Heart faint: From the sole of the Foot even unto the Head, there is no Soundness. And yet what says the Prophet even to such a Profligate, Perverse Nation, as this? ^l Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes; Cease to do Evil; Learn to do well; Relieve the oppressed; Judge the Fatherless; Plead for the Widow.—Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Tho' your Sins be as Scarlet they shall be white as Snow, tho' they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wool.*

³^{dly}, That the more to convince us of this Love of God, this Assurance of Pardon, God sent his own Son into the World, to publish a Gospel of Repentance for the Remission of Sins; to seal it with his own Blood; and by dying for us, to obtain a Fæderal Right to the Forgiveness of them. This is such an Earnest of the Love of God, such an Assurance of the Power of Christ, not only to forgive us, if we repent, but to save

^k Isa. i. 4, 5, 6.

^l Ibid. v. 16.

to the uttermost them that come to God through Him, as will admit of no Exception. For if when we were yet Sinners, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son, how much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his Life? Rom. v. 10. There is therefore no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit^m. If we confess our Sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousnessⁿ. But then we must wihal consider,

4^{thly}, That as without Repentance there is no Remission, so Repentance is the Work of this present Life. It must be done now, or it cannot be done at all. For in this Sense also that of the Wise Man holds true. Eccles. ix. 10. That there is no Work, nor Device nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom, in the Grave whither thou goest.

I need not say how short, and uncertain, our present Life is? How fast it flies away, and how soon for ought we know, it may be at an end? It should therefore be our Wisdom, as it is our Duty, not to procrastinate in an Affair of such infinite concern to us; which must be done sometime or other, or we shall be for ever miserable;

^m Rom. viii. 7.

ⁿ 1 Jo. i. 9.

and which if it be not done presently, may never be done at all. O! let this prevail with us immediately to set about it! *To make haste, and delay not to keep God's Commandments.* Psal. cxix. 6, *For in Death no Man remembreth Him, neither can any turn, or give Thanks to Him in the Pit.*

Or could we be sure of our *Abode* here; could we command our Time, and measure out our Days to the *utmost Extent* of *Humane Life*, yet would not this be any Security to us in the *delay* of our *Repentance*. There is a Day of *Spiritual*, as well as of *Natural Death*; and that such as sometimes comes before the other. There is a Time beyond which the *Spirit of God* will not *strive* with *wicked Men*; but leave them to the *Dominion* of their *sinful Lusts* and *Appetites*. And should this chance to be our Case, should we be thus *forsaken* of God, and *deprived* of the *Grace* of his *Holy Spirit*; what could remain for us but *blindness* of *Mind*, and *hardness* of *Heart* here, and the sad Consequence thereof *Eternal Damnation* hereafter.

Take heed therefore Brethren, lest there be in any of you an Evil Heart of unbelief in departing from the Living God. But exhort one another daily, whilst it is called to day, lest any of you be harden'd through the deceitfulness of Sin. Hebr. iii. 12, 13. *Behold now is the accepted Time; behold now is the Day of Salvation:*

tion^o: While you have yet not only *Life*, but *Grace* too, to fulfill what your *Duty*, and your *Happiness*, require of you. O! let not this *Opportunity* slip, which, if it be once past, can never be recalled. Consider that *Eternity* depends upon it; that you are now providing either for those *Joys*, or those *Miseries*, which neither *Eye* has seen, nor *Ear* heard, nor does it enter into the *Heart of Man* to conceive. If you *believe*, and *repent*, and be *converted*, you shall live. But if you shall still go on to *treasure up to your selves Wrath* against the *Day of Wrath*, you shall perish for ever; and too late find *what a fearful thing it is to fall into the Hands of the Living God*.

When the City of *Antioch* mutinied against *Theodosius*, and being carried away with a popular Fury, threw down the *Imperial Statues*, and dragg'd them about the Streets; and the *Emperor* enraged at their *Rebellion*, and *Indignities*, resolved utterly to destroy all the *Inhabitants* of it, and had sent out his *Officers* with a *Military Force* to execute his *Resentments* upon them; *S. Chrysostome* tells us, that being now come to themselves, and under a dismal *Apprehension* of their *approaching Ruin*; they all betook themselves to *Prayer* and *Devotion*. What his *preaching* in many Years could not effect, their own

^o 2 Cor. vi. 2.

^p Hom. ad pop. Antioch. xv.

Fears accomplish'd in a Moment. The *Theaters* were shut up, the *Plays* and *Spectacles* were abandon'd; no *Prophane Songs* were to be heard in the Streets. The *People* now crowded as much into the *Churches*, as they had been wont to do to the *Publick Shews* before. *Supplications* were made to God in every House; *Tears* stood in every Eye; The *Artizans* forsook their *Shops*, and their *Trades*, to spend their time in God's *Service*; the whole City, in short, seem'd to be but one general *Congregation* of *Holy, Penitent, and Religious Christians*. So great a *Change* did the prospect of their Danger make in all of them! And such a powerful Influence had their *Fears* upon them, to bring them to *Repentance*!

If the apprehension of the *Wrath* of one who was but a *Man*, and whose *Vengeance* could at the most reach no farther than their *present Lives*; whose *Anger* might be *appeased*, and whose *Punishment* they might possibly, as accordingly they did, *escape*; had so good an *Effect* to the *Reformation* of that great City: (A Place so overrun with *Vice* and *Luxury*, that the same *S. Chrysostome* not long before profess'd to them, that he question'd whether among the many *Thousands* that were computed to dwell there, one *Hundred* lived so well as to be *saved*;) How much more would the Fear of God's *Vengeance* work upon all of us, were we but as fully possess'd with the *Terrors* of the one, as they were filled with the *Expectation* of the other.

O!

O ! let us be persuaded to set them always before our Eyes ! Wheresoever we are, or whatsoever we go about ; let us still keep the sound of the *Last Trumpet* in our *Ears*, and have that dreadful Call ever upon our Minds, *Arise ye Dead, and come to Judgment.*

This will soon bring us to *work out our Salvation with fear and trembling* : It will keep us still in Awe ; and not suffer any Wanton, or Irregular *Lusts* to rise up in our *Hearts*, and lead us into *Temptation.*

This will not only free us from the Power of our *Sins*, but will improve us in our Duty ; and prompt us, *forgetting what is behind, to be still pressing forward after that which is before.*

This will carry us on, through *God's Grace*, unto *Perfection* ; and having fitted us for His Favour, will invert the *Sentence of the Text*, and make it become not a *fearful thing* to us, but the *Joy*, the *Longing*, the *chief Desire* of our *Souls* ; to depart, and to go into the *Hands of the Living God.*

To conclude all ; This will both deliver us from those extreme Dangers, of which I have been speaking ; and will entitle us to a *Crown* and a *Kingdom.* It will carry us from *Earth*, nay and even from *Hell*, to *Heaven* ; from *endless Misery*, to *Eternal Happiness* : Will fill us with *Peace* and *Comfort*, (the *present Effect* of a true *Piety*) here ; and secure us a *Reversion* of *Everlasting*

lasting Glory, (the full Recompence, and Reward of it,) hereafter.

*To which God of his Infinite Mercy, vouch-
safe to bring us all, through the Merits of
his dear Son, Jesus Christ our LORD.
To whom, &c.*



SERMON

S E R M O N XIII.

Preached in the Parish Church of

St. JAMES, Westminster,

March II. 1704.

I COR. V. 9, 10, 11.

I wrote unto you in an Epistle, not to company with Fornicators.

Yet not altogether with the Fornicators of this World; or with the Covetous, or Extortioners, or with Idolaters, for then must ye needs go out of the World.

But now I have written unto you, not to keep Company, if any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.



AS there is nothing more dishonourable to our *Christian Profession*, or that gives greater Cause of Fear and Sorrow to all wise and good Men, than that great Increase of *Vice and Immorality*, which has

been so notorious of late among us; so I cannot tell whether there be any Circumstance more deplorable with relation thereunto, than to consider how *vain* and *ineffectual* the *Endeavours* of those have been, who have labour'd the *most vigorously* to put a stop to it. It was one part of the Felicity of the *first Ages* of the *Church*, that Men not only generally *lived much better*, and had a much *greater Zeal* for the *Glory of God*, and the *Honour* of their *Religion*, than they now have; but if any one presumed to behave himself otherwise than it became his *Duty* to do, he was sure to be presently *Censured* for it; and to be forced either to come to a *publick Acknowledgment*, and *Amendment*, of his *Faults*; or to be *cast out of the Church* for them.

Now this at once both gave a great Check to the *Lusts* and *Passions* of *disorderly and vicious Persons*, and secur'd the *Piety* of those who were *well disposed*. And though it was not possible by this, or any other means, to prevent *Sin* from ever *entering* into the *Church* at all; yet a considerable stop was hereby put to the *increase* of it; and our Religion was effectually secured from *Reproach*, tho' its *Members* could not always be kept free from *offending*.

How it comes to pass, that a *Discipline*, thus *useful* in its self, and by *divine Authority* vested in the *Church*, is now become almost utterly neglected by it, I shall not here enquire. But since such is our present Case, that the *Publick Exercise* of it is well nigh totally laid aside; and
that,

that, as we may justly fear, without all hope of being any more revived; it may not be amiss to consider, how it was that the *Church* did once use to behave its self towards *open* and *scandalous Offenders*? And to see, whether we may not be able to draw from thence some *prudential Directions*, at least, for the conduct of such *private Christians* as wish well to *Religion*; and would be willing to set themselves, by their own voluntary Practice to *supply, in some Measure*, what is unhappily wanting to our *publick Discipline*.

And this is my design in the prosecution of the present *Text*; wherein I shall

I. Consider the *Occasion* which *St. Paul* had to deliver that *Advice* he here gives to the *Corinthians*; and what the *Method* of that *Procedure* was, which he recommended to their Practice.

II. I will enquire into the *Ground*, and *Reason*, of such his *Advice*. And

III. Will shew, how far we may still proceed in the *Practice* of it.

And I. Let us consider, the *Occasion* which *St. Paul* had to give that *Direction*, which we here meet with, to the *Corinthians*; and what the *Method* of that *Procedure* was, which he recommended to their Practice.

Now the Occasion of his *Advice* was this: A certain Member of the Church of *Corinth* had been guilty of a very great *Sin*, and by it had given a very great Scandal to many good *Men*, who had complain'd to the *Apostle* about it. Who this Person was, or how he came to have so great an *Interest*, as we find he had, in that Church, we cannot tell. But thus much we are inform'd of, that he had many Friends who stuck fast to him; and that his *Party* was so powerful, that the Governors of the Church had not yet thought fit to proceed to a publick *Censure* against him.

Thus stood this Matter when St. *Paul* wrote this *Epistle*; and therein both straightly commanded the *Offender* to be *Excommunicated*; and sharply reprov'd those who had *abetted* him; and caution'd them all against the like *Remissness* for the time to come.

But lest the *Corinthians* hereupon should carry things to an undue *Excess*; and be as much in the wrong hereafter through an immoderate *Severity* against such Offenders, as they had before shewn themselves faulty by their over-great *Tenderness*, and *Partiality*, towards this Person; he took care to lay down, more fully, and distinctly, the *Measures* by which he would have them proceed in all such Cases for the future; by their prudent observing whereof, they would be sure not to act amiss. He tells them, that what he had before said of not *keeping Company* with *Fornicators*, or rather of taking them away from

from them, *ſ. 2.* that is of proceeding to Ecclesiastical Censures against them, was not to be extended to the Gentiles among whom they lived; to those who were not of the same Religion with themselves; because neither had he, as an Apostle and Governor of the Church, any Authority over such as were without the pale of it; *ſ. 12.* Nor was it possible for them, amidst that degeneracy and corruption of Manners, which prevailed among the Heathens of that City, to avoid all Correspondence with such Offenders; unless they should wholly go out of the World, that is, withdraw themselves from all Civil Society with Unbelievers, and correspond only with one another; which upon many Accounts it would not be expedient, nor perhaps possible, for them to do. *I have written to you, says he, in an Epistle, not to company with Fornicators: Yet not altogether with the Fornicators of this World, or with the Covetous, or Extortioners, or with Idolaters, for then must ye needs go out of the World. For what have I to do, to judge them also that are without?*

But what then was the Direction, which he would have them observe in all such Cases? It follows in the next Words; *But now I have written unto you, not to keep Company, if any Man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one, no not to eat.*

For the better understanding whereof, you may please to consider these following Particulars.

(1st,) That they were to extend their Conduct, and Discipline, in these Cases, *only* to their *Fellow Christians*; to those who were *Members* of the same *Spiritual Body*, and over whom alone they had any *Right*, to *exercise* any *Spiritual Authority*.

(2^{dly},) That the Persons against whom they were to proceed by these kind of *Censures*, were not only to be *Members* of their *own Communion*, and *guilty* of such *Sins*, for which they *deserved* the *Churches Animadversion*; but they were to be *publickly*, and *notoriously* guilty of them: So the *Incestuous Corinthian*, upon whose account this Direction was given, had been; and so every *other Person*, against whom they were to proceed in like manner, ought to be.

Where *publick Discipline* is to be exercised, there must be a *publick Offence* committed; *Scandal* given; and a *publick Conviction* made of both. *Private Sins* are not, without some very particular Reasons, to be brought upon the *publick Stage*, and made the Subject of an *open Judgment*, or *Censure*. This would be, without need, to lay an *unreasonable Burden* upon *particular Persons*, and prejudice the Church too; and
Minister

Minister occasion of *Triumph* to the *wicked*, as well as of *Trouble* and *Discouragement* to good, but *weak Christians*.

If Men fall into Sins known only to God, and their *own Consciences*, both Prudence and Piety will direct them, to make their Repentance as Secret as their Offences were: If known but to a few, to be reprov'd, and corrected by some of those few in private; or at most before two or three Witnesses. But *publick Crimes* must be rebuked before all, that others also may fear; and that the Offender may thereby take off the Scandal he has given to the Church, and the Reproach he has brought upon it, as well as be moved to come to a more lively and sensible Sorrow, and Repentance towards God, for what he has done amiss.

Now this (3^{dly}), was to be observed, not in those particular Sins only which the Apostle here mentions; namely, *Fornication*, *Covetousness*, *Idolatry*, *Railing*, *Drunkennes*, and *Extortion*; but in all other Offences of the like kind. For tho' these be indeed some of the most heinous Sins that a Christian can well commit; and such as a Man cannot be publickly guilty of without bringing an Infamy upon the Church, as well as exposing himself to the Judgment of God; yet is there nothing particular in these Sins beyond Others, for which the Censures of the Church should be confined to these only; and therefore neither must we restrain them to these alone, but

must equally extend them to all other the like *Scandalous* and *Notorious Offences*.

This is a Remark so *reasonable* in its self, and so evidently founded upon the Authority of *Holy Scripture*, that we find, in other Places, the *Apostle's Catalogue* very much enlarged; and several other Crimes brought under the same Censures. Thus *S. Paul* commands the *Romans*, to mark those who cause Divisions, and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which they had learnt, and to avoid them; *Rom. xvi. 17.* The *Thessalonians*, to withdraw themselves from every Brother that should walk disorderly; *2 Thess. iii. 6.* And particularly under that Phrase comprehends idle Persons, and Busy bodies; *Chap. vi. 11.* And *Timothy*, in general, to rebuke them that Sin before all; *1 Tim. v. 20.* Which alone may suffice to take in all manner of publick and scandalous Transgressions.

And thus far, I suppose, there can be no doubt: That which may seem to admit of somewhat a greater Difficulty is, (4^{thly};) How far the Influence of this Censure was wont heretofore to extend? Whether only to the separating of such Offenders from the Religious Communion of the Church; and the participation of its publick Service and Sacraments? Or whether it did extend so far, as to render it unlawful for any Christian, (who had not some particular Obligation incumbent upon him so to do) to entertain any kind of familiar Society, or Correspondence, with them.

For

For answer to which *Question*, I reply; that when the *Discipline* of the *Church* came to be form'd into, and settled under, *Canonical Rules*; and there were several *Degrees* of these *Censures* establish'd, proportionable both to the *heinousness* of *Mens Sins*, to the *Scandal* that was given by them, and to the *Sense* and *Sorrow* of those who had been guilty of them; the *Sentence* was to take *Effect* according to the *Tenor* of those *Rules*; and every faithful Christian was to act so as the *Canons* of the *Church* required him to do.

But as it is plain, that the *Censurè* of which the *Apostle* here speaks, was of the *highest kind*; so it seems to be no less Evident, that it was the *Apostle's Intention*, that those who fell under it should be *excluded* thereby not from the *Communion* of the *Church* alone, but from all kind of *Civil Society* with their *Fellow Christians*.

To look no farther than the *Words* of the *Text*; what can be more clear, than that *S. Paul* meant to deprive the *Incestuous Corinthian*, of whom he spake, of all manner of *Familiarity* with the *Faithful* among whom he lived? And, that it was his *Direction* to them to treat all other the like *scandalous Offenders* after the same manner? *If any Man, that is called a Brother, (says he) be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one no not to eat.* And again *v. 15. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked Person.* And in the

2 Thess. iii. 14. He yet more fully expresses himself to the same Effect; *if any Man obey not our Word, Note that Man, and have no Company with him, that he may be ashamed.*

It is therefore most probable, that those who fell under this *Censure*, were to be deprived thereby of *all kind of Society* with their *Fellow Christians*; and might no more be *kept Company* with out of the *Church*, than *admitted* to the *Offices* of it. But still the main *Question* of all is to be consider'd; and that is,

(5^{thly}.) To whom it belong'd to *pass* such a *Censure*? And when it became the *Duty* of every *particular Person* to take notice of it, and to *withdraw himself* from such *Sinners*?

Now to this I answer, that as to the *former* of these *Enquiries*, the *Right of Censuring* an *Offending Christian*, was from the *Beginning* vested by *Divine Authority* in the *Church of Christ*, and does properly belong to the *whole Body* of it. For to these it was that our *Saviour* committed the *Power of the Keys*, S. Matth. xviii. 18. And to these it is, that S. *Paul* both gives the *Directions* we here meet with; and *charges* to put away *notorious Offenders* from among them.

Thus with relation to the *Incestuous Corinthian*, of whom he spake in this Chapter, v. 5. *In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ*, says he, *when ye are gathered together, and my Spirit, with the Power of our Lord Jesus Christ; to deliver such a one to Satan.* And again, v. 13. *Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked Person.*

Person. The whole is order'd to be done by the Church, and to that *S. Paul* supposes the Power of our Lord *Jesus Christ* to have been committed for the doing of it.

And indeed, if we look back to that place where this Authority seems first to have been given by *Christ* to his Church, we shall accordingly find, that it was to that, that the Power of binding and loosing in these Cases was committed by him; and that thither we are directed to carry our Complaints in order thereunto; *Matth. xviii.* Where having first provided for the private Admonition of our offending Brother; and next for somewhat a more publick Correption of him, before two or three Witnesses: He finally adds, *If he neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church. And if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a Heathen Man, and a Publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth, shall be bound in Heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on Earth, shall be loosed in Heaven; y. 17, 18.*

But tho' the Right of this Power be therefore vested in the Church, yet this does not hinder but that the Exercise of it, must be committed to the Rulers, and Governors of it. This Order requires, and the Method of all Societies shews it to be not only reasonable, but necessary. And therefore our Apostle, who in his Epistles to the Churches of Rome, Corinth, and Thessalonica, directed them to put away such Offenders from among them; has in his other Epistles to Timothy
and

and *Titus*, no less plainly shewn, that this was to be done in an orderly way; by those who had the *Authority*, in their several Churches, so to do. Let us hear how he speaks to those Holy Men, as Rulers of the Churches of *Crete* and *Ephesus*, to this purpose. 1 Tim. v. 19, 20, 21. *Against an Elder receive not an Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses. Them that Sin, rebuke before All, that others also may fear. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Elect Angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another; doing nothing by partiality. Lay Hands suddenly on no Man, that is, to restore him again to Communion, after having been separated from it. A Man that is an Heretick, after the first and second Admonition, reject.* Tit. iii. 10. All which Rules, as they evidently relate to the Exercise of this Discipline, so do they no less plainly shew in whose Hands the Exercise of it was lodged, and by whom the Church was to proceed in the Discharge of it.

'Tis true, these Persons; at the beginning, did not any where put these Censures in Execution but in the publick Assemblies of the Church, and with the common concurrence and approbation of it. ^a In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, says S. Paul, and my Spirit, when ye are gathered together, to deliver such an one unto Satan. ^b Them that Sin, Rebuke before All;

^a 1 Cor. v. 4, 5.

^b 1 Tim. v. 20.

in the Church, in the Congregation. And thus the *primitive Discipline* continued in the most *early Ages* of the Church; and has thereby left us this plain and certain Answer, to the former part of the *Enquiry*, we are now upon; namely, that the *Right of censuring publick Offenders*, and of *cutting them off* from the *Communion* of the Church, is lodged in the *Church of Christ*; and ought to be exercised by the *Bishops*, and *Rulers* of it.

As for the other part of the *Question* proposed; When it becomes the *Duty* of every *particular Christian* to withdraw himself from such *Persons*; it cannot be doubted but that as soon as the Church has *pass'd* its *Censure* upon them, every Member thereof is from *thenceforth* obliged to take *Notice* of it. The only Difficulty is, whether *private Persons* may not, in some Cases, *withdraw* from such *Offenders*, before the Church *requires* them so to do; nay tho' the Church should not proceed to any *publick Sentence* against them?

This is, I confess, a pretty hard Case; and the more common Resolution seems to be, that *private Christians* are not to anticipate, but to follow the *Churches Censures*. And without *Question*, where the *publick Discipline* of the Church is *strong* and *vigorous*; and *Sinners* are duly both *informed* against, and *prosecuted* according to their *Demerits*; it must be acknowledged to be most *safe*, and *charitable*, so to do.

But

But what if the Case of the Church should be so unhappy, that its Power should be lost, and the publick Discipline laid aside, so that it either cannot, or (at least) does not, proceed at all against such open and scandalous Offenders, as it ought to do? In such Circumstances as these, it has been the opinion of some of the best, and most learned of those, who have handled this Subject; that private Persons commendably may, and even ought to look to the Merits of such Criminals; and demean themselves towards them as their Offences deserve; and as the Church, were it in a due and full Exercise of its Authority, would have required them to do.

And indeed, besides that the Expressions of the Apostle in this Case are general, and relate to the whole Body of the Churches to which he wrote; Now I beseech you Brethren, mark them who cause Divisions, and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learnt, and avoid them; Rom. xvi. 17. Now we command you, Brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every Brother, that walketh disorderly: 2 Thess. iii. 6. And in the Words of our Text, I have written unto you, (the Church of Corinth) if any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, &c. with such a one no not to eat: There is thus much Reason in the thing its self, that both the Ends for which this Discipline was instituted, do in these Circumstances require such a Procedure;

ture; and the *Right*, and *Duty*, of *censuring Offenders*, being committed to the *whole Church*, it does not appear how the *Neglect*, or *Disability*, of the *Governors* of the *Church* to proceed against *such Sinners*, should excuse the *Members* of it from doing their part, that is, from *withdrawing* themselves from the *Society* of open, and notorious, and scandalous *Sinners*; which is the only way, wherein they can shew their dislike of their *Practices*, or their *Desire* of having them brought to publick *Shame* and *Punishment* for them.

This therefore, I take to be, if not strictly the *Duty* of *private Christians* in such Cases, and under such Circumstances, yet to be very fit to be observed by them. They should do, what in them lies, by their *own Conduct* to supply what is wanting to the *Churches Discipline*: And so fulfill the *Command* or *Direction*, of the *Text*; *If any Man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, (i. e. If any Christian be publickly, and scandalously guilty of these, or the like Sins) with such an one no not to Eat.*

By what *measures* we are to conduct our selves in *withdrawing* from the *Society* of these *Persons*, so as not to act either imprudently, or uncharitably, towards them, I shall hereafter shew, when I come to the *particular Application* of these *general Rules* of *Apostolical Discipline*, to our *own Concern* in the *Practice* of them. In the

the mean time let it suffice to add, that whether we consider our *Duty to God*, and the *Honour of His Church*; or the *Charity* we owe to our *Fellow Christian*, and the Obligation which lies upon us, to do our Parts to convince him of the *Heinousness and Danger* of his *Sins*, and to bring him to a *serious Repentance* for them; whether we regard our own *Innocence*, or the *Security* of our *Neighbour*, and the Obligation we are under, upon both these accounts, to forbear the Contagious Society of *scandalous Offenders*, lest *we*, or *they*, be led away by their *Example*, or *Persuasion*, into the like Crimes; all these require us to *note such Transgressors*, and *avoid them*; and not to enter into any close *Familiarity* or *Intimacy* with those, who by their *Vices*, and *Immoralities*, have made themselves *Enemies to God*, and a *Reproach and Scandal* to the *Church of Christ*.

As for that Communion which we *cannot avoid*, of meeting together in the same *Church*, at the same *Prayers*, perhaps the same *Holy Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper*, with them; this, as we are not to answer for, (unless we neglect our Duty in not giving such *Information* to the *Church*, as we ought to have done, against them, whereby to prevent their Admission to the last of these, the *Holy Communion*) so neither should we be *offended* at it. There was a *Judas* among the *Twelve Apostles*, and our Saviour knew his Heart, and what he intended to do: Yet did He nevertheless eat with him *at the Table*; and,

as several of the Ancients, from S. *Luke's* account of it, suppose, was present at the very *Institution* of the Blessed *Eucharist*. If they come with a true *Repentance* for their *Sins*, (and that we should hope they do) we ought to *bleſs* God for it, and to rejoyce at their *Conversion*. If for some other End; yet who can tell, but that God may by the awe of such a *sacred Solemnity*, awaken their *Conſciences*, and open a way to their *Conversion*. Be it how it will, we are not to answer for their *Unworthineſs*; nor shall we find the *Grace of God*, and the *Blessings* of that *Divine Supper*, ever the more restrain'd from flowing down upon us, because some, who *communicate* with us therein, are not (it may be) so well *prepared* for it, as they ought to be.

Here then let us not account it either our *Fault*, or *Misfortune*, to *accompany* with any one; but rather let us hope the best of all who come to the same *Prayers*, and *Sacrament*, with us. But as to any *Indifferent*, or *Voluntary*, *Friendship* and *Acquaintance* with *open* and *notorious*, while they withal continue *Impenitent Sinners*; let us avoid it as much as we can, and as our necessary *Engagements*, or *Relations*, will allow us to do.

If by our Company we cannot gain them, let us not *tempt* God to permit them, by any undue *Familiarity* with them, to *corrupt* us. But rather let us shew, that we are indeed concern'd in

in the *Affront* they put upon *God*, and his *Holy Religion*; which by *them* is despised, and through them is *evil spoken* of; and by our own choice begin that *Separation* here, which (unless they timely Repent) *God*, by His just Sentence, will make between us to *all Eternity* hereafter.

To this God, Holy and Blessed, be ascribed, as is most due, Salvation and Glory, &c. both now and for ever. Amen.



SERMON

S E R M O N XIV.

Preached in the Parish Church of

St. JAMES, Westminster,

March 18. 1704.

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I COR. V. 9, 10, 11.

*I wrote unto you in an Epistle, not to company with Fornicators.*

*Yet not altogether with the Fornicators of this World; or with the Covetous, or Extortioners, or with Idolaters, for then must ye needs go out of the World.*

*But now I have written unto you, not to keep Company, if any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.*



Have endeavour'd to shew you, in my former Discourse upon these *Words*, what the *Discipline* of the *Primitive Church* was with relation to *open* and *scandalous Offenders*. The Sum of what I more largely deduced, under several

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parti-

particular Remarks, amounts to this: That as *private Faults* were *privately*, and *secretly* reprov'd and *corrected*, according to *Christ's Command*: So if any one sinn'd *publickly*, or otherwise did any thing, by which the *Honour of God* was likely to be *profaned*; the *Christian Religion* to be despis'd; the *Church* to be *evil spoken of*; or any *Number of good Men* to be *justly offended*; the Person, who thus transgress'd, was wont to be *openly* and *publickly* censured; to be *deprived* of the *Communion of the Church*; and, in many Cases, to be *separated* from the *Society* of all the *good and faithful Members* of it.

Till such a *Discipline* as this may again be restored among us (which though our *Church* has long wish'd for, yet does it seem to be as far off from accomplishing it now, as it was at the beginning of the *Reformation*) I thought it might be of some Use to all such as wish for, or labour after a *Reformation of Manners* among us, to consider, how far *particular Persons* commendably may, and, in some measure, ought to keep up some shadow at least of such a *Discipline*; by *voluntarily withdrawing themselves from the Company*, and *Familiarity*, of *open and notorious Offenders*?

And if upon the enquiry it shall appear, that both the *Reasons* which moved the *Church* to exercise such a *Discipline* heretofore, and the *Ends* which she aimed at by it, do equally require the *Care of every private Christian*, as they do the *Authority of the whole Church*, in this  
part i.

particular: That by such a Method as this, we may be the most likely to secure our own *Integrity*; and to promote the *Glory* of God; the *Interests* of Religion; the *Piety* of those who are yet *Innocent*, and the *Reformation* of such as have *offended*, and may by such a treatment, beyond any thing, the most probably be *reclaimed*: It will then, I hope, be no unseasonable Exhortation (especially at this time) to beseech you to consider, how you can better shew your desire of advancing all these *great* and *good Ends*, than by taking the *Advice* of *S. Paul* in my Text; *Not to keep Company, if any Man, that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or Covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a one no not to eat.*

For the farther Prosecution of which good Design, there are these two things remaining to be considered:

I. What the Reasons were, which moved our Blessed Saviour, and his Apostles, to establish such a Discipline in the Church; and the Ends they chiefly aim'd at by it? And,

II. How far we may still continue the Practice of it?

I. Let us consider, What were the Reasons that moved our Blessed Saviour, and his Apostles, to

establiſh ſuch a *Discipline* in the *Church*, and the *Ends* which they chiefly aimed at by it ?

Now thoſe were eſpecially theſe Three:

- (1<sup>ſt</sup>.) To *vindicate* the *Honour*, and to *main-  
tain* the *Purity*, of our *Religion*.
- (2<sup>dly</sup>.) For the *Shame*, and *Reformation*, of thoſe  
who were to be thus *Cenſured*. And
- (3<sup>dly</sup>.) For the *Security* of others ; and to keep  
them from *offending* by the *Example* of  
their *Puniſhment*.

(1<sup>ſt</sup>.) Such a *Discipline* was neceſſary to have  
been eſtabliſh'd, and kept up, in the *Church* of  
*Chriſt*, for the *Vindication* of the *Honour* of our  
*Religion*, and to *ſecure* the *Purity* of it.

When *Chriſtianity* began to be firſt publiſh'd to  
the *World*, our *Saviour* himſelf tells us, that his  
*Church* ſhould be like a *City built upon an Hill*,  
that could not be hid. Such a *new Inſtitution*  
would not fail to *attract* the *Eyes*, and *engage*  
the *Curioſity*, of all Men, to enquire into it : And  
therefore it was very requiſite, that great Care  
ſhould be taken, that there might lie no *juſt Ex-  
ceptions* againſt it.

Now this, as to what concern'd the *Religion*  
its ſelf, the *Infinite Wiſdom* of *Chriſt*, and the  
*Perfection* of all his *Precepts*, ſufficiently pro-  
vided for. He taught nothing but what was *wor-  
thy of all Acceptation* : Or, if there was any  
ſcruple on this ſide, it might ſeem rather to ariſe  
(as accordingly with ſome it did) from the *over-  
great*



great *Strictness*, and *Severity*, of his *Commands*, than from any *Looseness*, or *Impurity* in them; for which there could be no Pretence.

But though our *Religion* were never so *Excellent*, yet the *Lives* of its *Professors*, might possibly not be agreeable thereunto: And this might give as much occasion to its *Enemies* to *blaspheme* against it, as if the *Institution* its self had been in Fault. The greatest part of Mankind judge according to *outward appearance*. They look not to the bottom of Things, nor are so nice as to distinguish between what *Men do*, and what they *ought to do*: But conclude, at all Adventures, that that *Religion* must needs be *bad*, the *Professors* whereof are generally not *good*.

It was therefore very necessary that this *Danger* should be provided against; and a just Care be taken, as for the *Punishment* of *wicked doers* in the *other World*; so also for the *Prevention* of that *Scandal*, which might otherwise, by their means, be brought upon the *Church of Christ*, now in this *present Time*.

And accordingly we meet with *frequent Rules* deliver'd to the *Christians* of those first Times, and in them to us, with particular Relation to the *Conduct* of themselves upon this Account: That <sup>a</sup> *their Light should so shine before Men, that others seeing their good Works, might glorify their Father which is in Heaven.* <sup>b</sup> *That they should provide things honest in the sight of all*

<sup>a</sup> Mat. v. 16.

<sup>b</sup> Rom. xii. 17.

*Men.* That <sup>c</sup> they should have their Conversation honest among the Gentiles, that they might be ashamed who should falsely accuse their good Conversation in Christ. In short, <sup>d</sup> That they should give none Offence, neither to the Jew, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God.

But because such is the *Weakness*, and *Wickedness* of *Mankind*, that the best Precepts are not sure always to meet with a suitable *Observation*, it was therefore necessary to secure both the *Honour* of *Christ*, and the *Purity* of his *Religion*, that the Members of his *Church* should not only have such *Excellent Rules* as these, given them for their *Direction*, but should moreover have some *Obligation* laid upon them, to live according thereunto. Now *secular Power* the *Church*, at the Beginning, had none to support it; It could neither *fine*, nor *imprison*; could neither *restrain* Mens Persons, nor *confiscate* their Estates: But it could deprive those, who would not *live up* to the Rules of the *Gospel*, of all *Right* to its *Society*; and *command* its own *Members* to *withdraw themselves* from them; and *declare* as openly its *Renunciation* of such *wicked Persons*, as they could by their *Vices* shew their *contempt* of its *Laws*.

And this was enough to wipe away all that *Scandal* which might otherwise, through their Practices, have fallen upon our *Religion*: Nay, it was sufficient to do much more, *viz.* to triumph over the *Irregu-*

<sup>c</sup> 1 Pet. xii. 12.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. x. 32.

larities of wicked Men, and turn their very Sins to the greater Honour of our Profession. Whilst by thus casting off such Persons from their Society, the Christian Church declared to all the World, that the Gospel detested their Impieties: That Christianity was a Religion too pure to admit of any open Immoralities; and that those who would be accounted the Disciples of it, must equally resolve to believe its Revelations, and to live according to its Prescriptions. And tho' the State of the Church be herein very different Now, from what it was at the Beginning; yet were this Discipline but duly kept up in it, I am persuaded it would bring much more Honour to our Religion from without, and more successfully secure the Piety of those within, than all those secular Assistances, which have come into the Place of it, will ever be able to do; the ineffectualness whereof, to this Purpose, we have too long had a melancholy Conviction of.

Which brings me to the next thing, which obliged the Christian Church to exercise such a Discipline over its own Members, namely,  
 - (2<sup>dly</sup>.) For the Shame, and Reformation, of those who were to be censur'd by it.

It was the great Rule of S. Paul, with relation to these Matters. 2 Cor. x. 8. That the Power which was given unto him, as an Apostle of Christ, was for Edification, and not for Destruction. And therefore when, in the Chapter before us, he commanded the Incestuous Person to be delivered over unto Satan for the De-

*struction of the Flesh*; the End of it was, that he might thereby be brought to Repentance, and so the Spirit might be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus, *ſ. 5.*

And accordingly the *Event* shewed both how effectual such a *Discipline* as this is to correct Men's Vices, and how *charitably* it ought to be used by the *Church* in order thereunto; 2 *Cor.* ii. 6. where we find, that no sooner was that Unfortunate Man brought by this means to a *Conviction* of his *Sin*, and to a *publick Sorrow* and *Repentance* for it; but the *Apostle* immediately commanded the Sentence to be *released*, and the *Penitent* to be *received* again into *Communion*; lest he should be swallow'd up of overmuch Grief; *ſ. 7, 8.*

Nay, but this is not all: Such *Sinners* were not only cut off from the *Communion* of the Church in order to their *Amendment*, and with a Design of *restoring* them, as soon as ever the *Censure* had wrought its Effect upon them; but, in the mean time, they were not to be wholly *abandon'd*; but all Care was to be taken, to *help* on the *Work*, and to *persuade* them to *consider* and *repent* of their *Evil-doings*. And therefore when *Christians* are required to *withdraw* themselves from such *Offenders*, 'tis to this End, that they may be *ashamed* of their *Impieties*: And must be always understood with this *Exception*, unless it be in *Order of their Reformation*. So *S. Paul* limits his own Command. 2 *Thess.* iii. 14. *If any Man obey not our Word, by this Epistle,*

note



note that Man, and have no Company with him, that he may be ashamed; yet count him not as an Enemy, but admonish him as a Brother.

From all which it appears, that next to the Honour of Christ, and the Vindication of his Gospel; there was nothing either more directly aimed at, or that ought to be more earnestly sought by such a Discipline, than the Reformation of the Person, who falls under the Censure of it.

There was yet one Ground more for the Exercise of such a Discipline in the Church, against open, and notorious Offenders, and that was,

(3<sup>dly</sup>.) To secure others from Sinning, by the Example of their Punishment. For Sin is not only Evil, but Contagious; apt to infect others, as well as to harden those who fall under the Power of it.

It is one part of our Misfortune in this present World, that we are therein both exposed to many Temptations, and are, in our own Natures, but too apt to be overcome by them. And therefore it was necessary for the Church to take all possible Care, to keep Men upon their Guard; and to oblige them to watch, and pray, and not suffer themselves to be easily led away by the deceitfulness of Sin.

Now, in order hereunto, as such a Publick Discipline must needs have been of excellent Use, so we find, that this also was another Motive,

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to our Saviour, and His Apostles, for the Establishment of it.

This S. Paul intimates in his Direction to the Romans, chap. xvi. 17. Where commanding them to mark those, who caused Divisions and Offences among them, contrary to the Doctrine which they had received, and avoid them; he adds, for they that are such, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own Belly, and by good Words, and fair Speeches, deceive the Hearts of the Simple.

But in the Chapter before us, he plainly speaks it out; v. 6, 7. Where having commanded the Incestuous Corinthian to be excommunicated, he thus gives, as it were, the Reason of it: Know ye not that a little Leaven leaveneth the whole Lump: Purge out therefore the old Leaven. And in his Epistle to Timothy, 1 Tim. v. 20. Them that Sin, says he, Rebuke before All, that others also may fear.

But this was not all the danger, tho' this were enough, that others might run, by the ill Examples, and wicked Conversation, of such Offenders. No; when Men's Sins are open and scandalous, their very Society becomes a Crime: God looks upon them as His Enemies, and accounts it to be a Sin, for any that belong to Him, to have any thing to do with them. This S. John declares, as to one sort of Offenders; and we have reason to believe, that it ought equally to be apply'd to all other the like great, and notorious Transgressors. 2 Joh. 10. If there  
come

come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your House, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his Evil Deeds.

Let us add to this, that it is not barely an *Act* of *Prudence*, but a matter of *Duty* too, in every Christian, to take all reasonable Care to maintain a good Name among Men, as well as to preserve a good Conscience towards God; and not to give occasion for his (c) *Good to be evil spoken of*. Now this again made it necessary for Christians to break off Communion with scandalous Offenders, lest thereby those who took notice of it, should conclude, as reasonably they might, that they themselves were not so well affected to *Virtue* as they ought to be. For, as our *Apostle* argues in a Case, not much different from that before us, *What Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? And what Communion hath Light with Darkeness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? Be ye not therefore unequally yoked with Sinners.* 2 Cor. vi. 14.

I have passed over these *Reflections* with a much greater brevity, than the Weight of them deserved, that so I might the sooner come to that *Improvement*, which I chiefly proposed to make of them, by shewing

II. How far we may warrantably proceed in the *Practice* of such a *Discipline* Now.

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And here 1<sup>st</sup>, I do not see, but that it is, in general as much the *Right* and *Duty* of the *Church*, to proceed by *Ecclesiastical Censures* against *open* and *scandalous Offenders*, Now, as ever it was at the *first appearance of Christianity*. The *Commands* which have been given to it, for this purpose, are *Absolute*, and *Unlimited*; and so is the Authority too. They refer not to *any one particular Time, or State*, of the *Church*; which being *determined* they were from thenceforth to *cease*: But they are delivered as *Rules* and *Directions* for the *Exercise* of a *Discipline* which would be *always* of *use* to it, and should therefore always *continue* to be *practised* by it.

And accordingly we may observe, that the *Grounds* on which this *Discipline* is *establiſh'd*, (and from whence we may the best judge of the *Obligation* under which the *Church* lies to the *Exercise* of it) are of a *perpetual Nature*, and will equally continue to *inforce* the use of it under all *Circumstances*, and in all *Eſtates* of it. Such are the *Honour* of *God*; the *Preſervation* of the *Gospel Purity*; the *Reformation* of *wicked Men*, and the *Security* of thoſe who are yet *Innocent*. Now all theſe as much require the *care* of the *Church* to keep up ſuch a *Discipline*, and not ſuffer *open* and *impenitent Sinners* to go unpuniſh'd, in theſe *Days*, as ever they did at the *Beginning* of the *Gospel*. And I may add, that the *Peace* and *Tranquillity*, which ſhe enjoys under *Chriſtian Princes*, and the



the *decay of Piety* arising from thence in too many of her Members, do even *more require* her to be very *strict* and *severe* in the Exercise of it, than if she still lay under a *State of Tryal* and *Persecution*.

Nor let any one think, that since the *Civil Powers* have embrac'd the *Gospel*, the whole Care of these Matters is so far *devolv'd* upon *them*, that the *Church* has now no more to do with them. Were the Case of *Christian States* indeed so happy, that a Man could not offend in any wise against the *Rules* of his *Religion*, but he should be sure to be *punish'd*, or brought to *Shame*, by the *Civil Magistrate* for it; this would make the Care of the *Church* more easy; and the *fewer Offenders* there would by this means be to need her *Censures*, the less occasion would she have for the Infliction of them. But yet still, if any *scandalous Sinners* should arise, it would nevertheless be her Duty to *suspend* them from her *Sacraments*, or even to *cut them off* from her *Communion*, till they should *repent*; and to *admonish* her *faithful Members* to withdraw themselves from their *Society*. Nor do I see how, without doing this, the Church can either so sufficiently, as it were to be wish'd, *testify* her *Regard* to *Christ's Commands*; or her Care for the *Security*, and *Reformation* of his *Servants*.

It is therefore certainly as much the *Duty* of the *Church*, thus to proceed against *open Offenders*

ders Now, as ever it was from the *Beginning*: And in order thereunto I conceive,

2<sup>dly</sup>, That it must also be the *Duty* of every *Member* of the *Church* to be *Assistant* to her, in order thereunto. For the *Church* is nothing else but the *whole collective Body* of the *Faithful*, of which every *Member* is a part. If therefore it be the *Duty* of the whole to keep up such a *Discipline*, it must also be the *Duty* of every one in *particular* to contribute, what in him lies, to the doing of it.

Now the *Exercise* of such a *Discipline* being to be manag'd in the way of a *Judicial Process*, which cannot regularly be carry'd on without *Informers*, and *Witnesses*, any more than without some kind of *Ecclesiastical Judicature* to receive, and hear, the *Informations* which are to be brought before it; it will follow, that to keep up such a *Discipline* in its full force and vigour, both the *Governors* of the *Church* should be ready to receive *Accusations*, and *Censure Evil-doers*; and every *particular Person* should be also willing to *inform against them*, and to help to *prosecute* them for their *Offences*.

Nor ought any one to be *over-nice* in the Discharge of his *Duty* in this particular. 'Tis, I confess, in the general Notion of the thing, an *odious Employment* to be an *Informers*; and such as a Man would not, without some very great Reason, take upon himself. But yet, where the *Glory of God*, the *Honour of Religion*, and the  
Souls

*Souls* of Men are concern'd; where Sinners are to be *discover'd*, and *censur'd*, only in order to their *Amendment*; and even that is not done, till all *other Means* appear to be ineffectual, in order thereunto; 'tis so far from deserving to be thought any Reproach to bring *notorious Offenders* to *Censure*, that rather it would be a Crime not to do it; and bespeaks us to have a greater Regard to the *Opinion* of *Men*, than to the *pleasing* of *God*, and the *saving* of *Souls* from everlasting *Ruin* and *Destruction*.

But 3<sup>dly</sup>, It should not only be our Care to do what in us lies to bring such *open* and *scandalous Offenders* to *Censure*; but if that cannot be done, if either through want of *sufficient Power* in the *Church*, or by any *Negligence* or *Defect* in the Exercise of it; or by whatever other means it be that the *publick Discipline* is suffer'd to fall into a *general Decay*; it will then become all *good Men* to behave themselves towards them in such wise, as if they were *censured* by the *Church*; and (in the Words of *S. Paul*) *to note those Men, and have no Company with them, that they may be ashamed.*  
2 Thess. iii. 14.

I have before observed it to have been the *Opinion* of some of the best of those, who have treated of these Matters; that in such *Circumstances as these*, the *Rules* of our *Apostle* before-mentioned, even *without any Sentence*, bind the *Consciences* of *private Persons* to the *Observation*

vation of them. And I will now add this farther Reason for it, besides what I before offered; That we ought to suppose, that it is the *Desire*, and *Intention*, of the *Church*, that they should do so: Who, tho' she may be under such *unhappy Circumstances*, as not to be able to *prosecute Offenders*, as she could *wish*; and as, by the *Rules* of the *Gospel*, she has a *Right* to do; yet we ought not to doubt, but that she looks upon such a *Disability* to be a great *Misfortune* to her, and would be glad she might be left to a more free pursuit of such *Criminals*: And in the mean time will be pleased to see them *disfountenanc'd* by her *Members*, and *treated* so, as if she had pass'd those *just Censures* they *deserve* upon them.

But however, whether to *withdraw* from such *Persons*, upon our own *private Knowledge* and *Conviction* of their *Impieties*, be a Matter of exprefs *Duty*, in obedience to these *Rules* of *S. Paul*, or no: This is certain, and will admit of no Question, that if to keep Company with them be *lawful*, yet not to do it, is (generally speaking) *better*, and more *safe*; and will more clearly shew both our Zeal for God's Glory, and our *Desire* to bring such Persons to a hearty *Sense* of, and *Repentance* for, their Sins. This, I say, is certain, and beyond all doubt; and that should be enough to *determine* the choice of every good *Christian* in such a *Case*.

Only



Only that we may act in this *Matter* with *Prudence*, as well as with *Piety*, and not suffer our *Zeal* towards *God* to carry us to any *Indecent*, or *Uncharitable*, *Behaviour*, towards our *Neighbour*; some few *Cautions* may be necessary to be taken Notice of, for the better *Conduct* of ourselves in this Respect.

For 1<sup>st</sup>, The Persons, whose *Company* we are to avoid, must be *open* and *scandalous Offenders*. Their Vices must be *Publick* and *Notorious*, before we proceed to a *publick forsaking* of their *Company*.

2<sup>dly</sup>, They must not only be *openly wicked*, but they must be *heinously* so too. Their Sins must be of a more than ordinary *Malignity*; such as *St. Paul* mentions in the Words of the *Text*, and more fully reckons up, *Gal. v. 19.* and brands with this Character, *That they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* And even then

3<sup>dly</sup>, They must be avoided by such only as have not any *particular Obligation* lying upon them to *keep Company with them*.

Some are by *Nature tied* to one another, as *Husband and Wife*, *Parents and Children*; others by the *Laws of Civil Society*, as *Subjects* to their *Rulers*; the Members of the same *Family*, or *Community*, with one another. And lastly, others by the *Laws of common Charity and Humanity*: Such are the Obligations of *Physicians*, and other *Assistants*, to those who

are Sick; of Teachers to those who are Ignorant; in short, of every Man to another, whom he may be likely, by his good Advice, or Friendship, to reclaim from his Evil doings.

Now in all these, and the like Cases, the very worst of Men must be accompanied withal. The Society with which Religion concerns its self, is only that of our voluntary choice, and allowance; which we may forbear without a Fault, and therefore cannot continue in without Scandal, nor perhaps without Sin.

And even here, 4<sup>thly</sup>, The whole must be manag'd with great Kindness and Charity; Prudence and Moderation. We must shew that we desire to discourage the Sin, but not the Person; and aim at his Reformation, in what we do, not at his Confusion.

Having thus shewn, how far it may besit us, still to keep up a sort of voluntary Discipline in the Church, towards Evil-doers; even now that the antient, and useful Method, of censuring such Offenders is almost utterly laid aside among us, and by what Measures we should proceed in the Practice of it; I shall only stop so long, as to draw a Conclusion or two from what has been said, and so put an End to this Subject. And

(1.) If such should be our Care to discountenance Evil doers, and as much as in us lies, to avoid all Communication with them, that they may be ashamed; then certainly we ought to be

be much more careful not to *enter* into any such *voluntary Obligations* to them, as will necessarily require a *constant* and *intimate Correspondence* with them.

I shall instance only in one of these, and that is the *Case of marrying* with a *notorious Sinner*; such as an open *Fornicator*, or *Adulterer*, or *Extortioner*, or *Swearer*; or, which is yet more to be consider'd, with a *Person of a different Religion from our selves*.

I should, I fear, be thought to carry this Matter too far, should I say, that such Marriages as these are by *the Word of God unlawful*: And yet on the other side, it would be as much too little, to say that they were only *unseemly*, or, *Inconvenient*. This is certain, that *St. Paul* heretofore would not suffer the *Christians* under his *Direction*, to be *unequally yoked together with Unbelievers*; and I am confident had the *Question* been put to him concerning *Idolatrous*, or *Adulterous*, or *Schismatical Christians*, he would have given the same *Resolution* to it.

Indeed, if it be the Misfortune of a *faithful*, and *good Christian*, to be so *unequally yoked*, he must *bear his Burden* as well as he can; and endeavour if it may be, to *reform*, or *convert*, the *erring*, or *offending Party*. But voluntarily to enter into such a *Society* and *Obligation*, is, in my opinion, to *tempt God*, and to *endanger our own Souls*; and I believe it has

rarely been known, that such *Marriages*, commonly contracted only for worldly Interest, or Convenience, have *proved happy, and successful*, in the End.

But (2.) If to keep Company with *open, and scandalous Offenders*, be a Fault, much more must it be a Crime and a Sin to give Countenance and Encouragement to them in their *Evil-doings*.

There is a *Case* but too common in the *World*, and almost as full of *Danger*, as well as of *Offence*, as that I before-mentioned; and it is, the unhappy Necessity of *Dependance* upon *Rich, or Great*, but withal *wicked Men*, for *Protection* or *Advancement*. How many *sober Christians* do for these Ends accompany with the most *Profligate Sinners*, and are *Witnesses* of their *Impieties*, and sometimes *tempted* even to give some Marks of their Approbation of them? But to their *Consciences* I shall leave it to consider, whether this be not to make themselves *Partakers with them in their Evil-doings*; and whether they shall not one day be called to answer for those Sins, which they see daily committed without *Reproof*, and some times with an *Appearance* of *Complacency* in them.

Let me add yet one Instance more, and that of a *larger Extent*, and a more unhappy Influence upon *Piety and Religion*: It is the *Case* of *frequenting our Modern Plays*; I am unwilling



ling to add, and of giving thereby Countenance and Encouragemnt to them.

How fatally these have contributed to the Debauchery of the present Age, I shall not now enquire: This I must observe as a great *Aggravation* of *their Guilt*, who still continue to have any *Fellowship* with them; that the *Leudness* and *Impiety*, the *Profaneness* and *Immorality* of the *Stage*, are no longer unknown to them. They have been exposed to the whole World; and the very sight of them has been enough to raise a *Horror* in the *Minds* of all who are not utterly lost to any Sense of *Piety* and *Religion*. And for any *Christians*, after this, to *continue* to *indulge a Liberty both Criminal in its self*, and *offensive* to all good *Men*; and such as will *entitle* them, in *effect*, to a *part* in all the *Sins* that are *committed*, and all the *Scandal* that is *given*, by these means: What is it but to shew that they love their own *Pleasure*, more than the *Honour of God*, and his *Service*; and will rather *venture* to *provoke* his *Anger*, than *deprive* themselves of any *Liberties*, to which their *Sensual Lusts*, and *Appetites*, invite them.

But I must not pursue these *Reflections* any farther; and I doubt, that in what I have already offered, I shall be thought to have intrench'd too far upon the *Practice* of the *World*, and those *Freedoms of Conversation*, which are too commonly *taken*, and *allow'd*, in it. If any should  
happen

happen to have such an *Opinion* of what I have now been speaking; I shall only say, that I have *delivered* nothing but what I take to be the *Truth*; and what every one must *allow*, were it but *carefully follow'd*, would very much *conduce* to the *Honour of God*, the *Promotion* of true *Piety* and *Religion*, the *Reformation* of *Evil doers*, and the *Security* of those, who are yet *free* from such *Great* and *Dangerous Offences*.

Now to labour after these Things, our *Duty* towards *God* *requires* of us: The *Credit* of our *Religion* *invites* us to it: Our *Governors*<sup>s</sup> *solemnly recommend* it to us; and we, as the *Ministers* of *Christ*, *beseech* you to *comply* with their *Admonitions*.

God of His Mercy grant, that you may All be *Ready* and *Disposed* so to do! That Sin may at last, in good Earnest be *discountenanc'd*; and become as *scandalous* in the *Eyes of Men*, as it is *odious* in the *Sight of God*. Then shall we act as becomes *Reformed Christians* indeed. We shall *adorn* the *Purity* of our *Religion* with a suitable *Conversation*: And from *serving God* in *Holiness* and *Piety* here, we shall be *translated* to a *blessed Enjoyment* of him in *Glory* and *Happiness* to all *Eternity*.

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<sup>s</sup> See the Proclamations of King William and Queen Anne, for preventing and punishing Immorality and Profaneness; ordered to be read in the Church.

*To which He of His infinite Mercy grant  
we may all attain, thro' the Merits and  
Intercession of his Blessed Son Jesus Christ  
our Saviour : To whom with the Father,  
and the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and  
Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.*

*F I N I S.*



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